Guidelines for Using Students'

NATURAL JOBS

to Achieve the New Jersey Cross-Content

Workplace Readiness Standards

Acknowledgments

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In 1996, after several years of research, discussion and input from panels of educators, business people and other citizens, the State Board of Education adopted Core Curriculum Content Standards that established what graduates of New Jersey schools should know and be able to do. These standards include a set of Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards that apply to all areas of instruction.

Students can meet standards through participation in a number of activities in or out of the academic classroom, including supervised student cocurricular or extracurricular activities, school-based enterprises, Service Learning, apprenticeship programs and volunteer or paid employment. Employment activity—students' paid, part-time or full-time, after-school, weekend or summer work—is the topic of these *Guidelines*. These jobs, which students seek for themselves, are called natural jobs because they are a result of the natural forces of the labor market. The term "natural" is also used to differentiate them from school-initiated work-based learning experiences.

Using Natural Jobs

Data show that about 35 percent of young adults ages 16 to 17, and 53 percent of young adults ages 18 to 19, were working in after-school, weekend or summer jobs in 1996.[1] While more or less evenly divided on a gender basis (males 51 percent, females 49 percent), census information from 1990 in New Jersey shows that working students were much more likely to be white (41 percnet) with black and Asian students employed at a much lower rate (25 percent and 24 percent respectively). Hispanic students fell in the middle range of employment statistics (32 percent).

Research indicates that the academic performance of students who work fewer than 20 hours per week is not adversely affected.[2] However, students who work more than 20 hours per week have lower test scores, spend less time on homework and have more negative attitudes about school. Research also indicates that students who work while still in high school are more likely to get jobs when they leave and have higher earnings in post-high school positions. [3]

Most student employment falls into a few categories of jobs, with the

bulk of high school students employed in one or another aspect of the food-service industry (grocery stores, fast food or other restaurants). Other jobs include baby-sitting, lawn care, retail and, far less frequently, entry-level clerical positions.

While student employment seems to be relatively evenly distributed along economic lines, (high socioeconomic level youth employed at 49 percent, low socioeconomic at 44 percent) those students from poor families tend to work longer hours. [4]

Learning from workplace experiences can be clearly aligned with the Core Curriculum Content Standards through the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards. There are five Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards, each of which has approximately ten subset progress indicators. The standards, which are meant to be inclusive across all curriculum areas, follow:

1. All students will develop career planning and workforce readiness skills.

2. All students will use information, technology and other tools.

3. All students will use critical thinking, decision-making and problem-solving skills.

4. All students will demonstrate self-management skills.

5. All students will apply safety principles.

Naturally occurring jobs present students with the opportunity to demonstrate competency in a large percentage of the progress indicators for the above Workplace Readiness Standards. Included in the *Guidelines* are concrete examples of how a student would demonstrate competency in each of the progress indicators.

Developing the System: Principles and Steps

The process of demonstrating and documenting workplace readiness through natural jobs requires a strategic plan that includes parent and employer outreach mechanisms, gathering data from students and effective assessment and documentation. These *Guidelines* offer a series of steps for developing and implementing an inclusive, effective system. The steps provide a framework for a school district to design a home-grown and locally owned program.

Along with steps for documenting workplace readiness, the *Guidelines* also offer principles to guide those implementing the system. These principles can be helpful in dealing with the many issues surrounding use of students' natural jobs to document skills. These issues include the following:

- Addressing school staff responsibility and effective documentation and assessment.

- Addressing the largest barrier to program implementation faced by employers—the potential diversion of resources away from daily revenue-generating activities.

- Addressing student resistance to what might seem to be invasion of their private nonschool life.

While some of these barriers appear formidable, all key players have a common goal—youth who graduate from high school with the skills to enter the workforce and function as productive citizens. Success will be achieved by anticipating barriers and emphasizing the benefits for everyone. The steps and guiding principles offered here are aimed at producing a system that is clear, simple to manage and accountable—a benefit, not a burden, for all involved.

Documenting Workplace Readiness: Tools and Resources

Along with a framework and principles to guide those developing a system, the *Guidelines* offer tools and resources for informing stakeholders about the effort, gathering information about who is working and what they are doing on the job, assessing workplace readiness and tracking students' progress toward achieving the New Jersey Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards.

Just as the system for documenting workplace readiness will be developed by local school districts in response to their students and their community of employers and parents, the tools in these *Guidelines* can be adapted, customized and used to meet local needs.

Connecting Current Jobs to Future Careers: Strategies

Many students see their jobs only as a way to make money. They do not consider nor take advantage of the skill-building and career exploration opportunities their jobs offer. Although student jobs in some occupations are entry-level positions leading to desirable careers, other jobs, less well-related to students' career choices, can offer practice in the basic employability skills necessary for any occupation. Along with offering a system, framework, tools and resources for documenting workplace readiness, these *Guidelines* provide strategies for helping students connect their jobs to their future careers.

■ ■

1. *Employment and Earnings*. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Labor Statistics, January 1997.

2. D'Amico, R. "Does Employment During High School Impair Academic Progress?" *Sociology of Education*, 57:157-164, 1984; Steinberg, L.D. and S.M. Dornbusch, "Negative Correlates of Part-Time Employment during Adolescence: Replication and Elaboration," *Developmental Psychology* 27:2, 304-13; Steel, L, "Early Work Experience Among White and Non-White Youths: Implications for Subsequent Enrollment and Employment," *Youth and Society*, 22:419-47, 1991; Barton, P. "Earning and Learning: The Academic Achievement of High-School Juniors with Jobs*." The Nation's Report Card, Report* No. 17-WL-Ol, Princeton, NJ: National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1989.

3. Stern, David; Neal Finkelstein, James R. Stone III, John Latting, Carolyn Dornsife, *School to Work– Research on Programs in the United States.* The Stanford Series on Education and Public Policy, The Falmer Press, 1995.

4. The 1992 follow-up study to the *National Education Logitudinal Study* of 1988 (NELS: 88)

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INTRODUCTION

New Jersey has already established the workplace as an important learning environment for attaining the state's educational standards. As a general charge to school boards and districts, the New Jersey document *Core Curriculum Content Standards* states:

> *Insistence on a core curriculum means that every student will be involved in experiences addressing all of the expectations of all of the content standards. All schools should have as a common goal that their students will complete this core curriculum.*

> *Students...must therefore be allowed to gain and use in a variety of ways the knowledge represented by these core curriculum content standards. No longer should traditional courses provide the only means of learning and reinforcing concepts; schools need to seek out new avenues for learning and for the provision of resources. These avenues will likely include greater interaction with business, industry, local government, and community organizations; volunteer/service activities; and part-time jobs— all coordinated with school learning activities.*

> *Students can now obtain knowledge and skills in a multiplicity of ways. Therefore, it is most productive to concentrate on how we can best use resources to achieve higher order results across an array of content areas. Educators will need imagination to blend traditional academic perspectives with the exponentially expanding sources of information and talent available to themselves and their students. The challenge to the educational community, therefore, is to think outside the educational box within which most of us have been schooled.*

The New Jersey Department of Education has identified three major "experiences" through which students can develop the abilities and knowledge defined in the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards. Two of these experiences are outside the traditional "educational box":

■ The first of these, elaborated in the Core Curriculum Content Standards document itself, is through pursuit of the seven academic content areas. By nature, the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards are common themes found in all academic areas. "For instance," as the standards document says, "the need

for students to learn problem-solving and critical thinking skills was reflected in all of the sets of standards." Hence, schools can assess a student's progress on the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards by establishing procedures to document and record the development of such knowledge and abilities in the student's normal academic curricula.

■ Second, and likely to be more effective in relation to some sub-elements of the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards, are structured learning experiences. These will normally be designed to correlate directly with *New Jersey Standards and Assessment for Student Achievement,* produced by the New Jersey School-to-Work (STW) Partnership for the department's Office of School-to-Career and College Initiatives. The *Framework of the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards* guides local boards, districts and schools in the development of appropriate integrated learning activities. The framework suggests activities that will enable interested high school students to voluntarily explore career opportunities in clustered disciplines linked to the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

■ Third, and the subject of these *Guidelines*, are experiences gained by students in natural jobs. Large numbers of high school students both in New Jersey and across the nation seek, find and hold a broad range of jobs in local labor markets. These jobs are "natural" in the sense that they are the normal product of labor market forces and not designed or offered as formal work-based learning experiences under the School-to-Career movement. Nonetheless, such natural student jobs are often fertile opportunities for learning the skills and knowledge called for in the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards. Such learning should not go unnoticed, unvalued and unrecorded. Natural jobs are an especially important option because formal School-to-Career experiences can be difficult and time-consuming to design and implement. Using Natural Jobs is also important because the number of school-initiated structured learning experiences increases the options students have to achieve Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards.

The opportunity and challenge before local districts, boards and schools, then, is to capitalize on such natural jobs by identifying, assessing and documenting the learning they provide. Another advantage to reaching out to such employers is that as the employers themselves gain experience with these assessments, they may increasingly be open to enriching the work experiences of student employees and even extending their efforts to other School-to-Career programs.

The Purpose of the *Guidelines*

The chapters that follow provide frameworks, principles, steps, tools, resources and strategies to school district personnel for using natural jobs to help New Jersey students meet the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards. The materials included in this document are based on the premise that if entry-level work that young people find on their own is managed, supported and documented, it can become an important stepping stone in career development. Like the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards themselves, these *Guidelines* have been written to help schools define results expected from natural jobs but not limit district strategies for how to ensure their students achieve these expectations. The purpose of this document is to do the following:

- Summarize the general concepts underlying work-based learning and the potential for using natural work experiences as a context for learning and mastering New Jersey's Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards;

- Highlight the elements of the standards that are most directly connected to jobs young people already have and identify issues to address meeting the standards;

- Outline a system or framework for using students' jobs to meet the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards;

- Provide resource information and adaptable tools for 1) informing students, employers, parents and school staff of the option to use students' jobs to document workplace readiness, 2) assessing and documenting the skills and abilities young people develop during work and 3) tracking students' progress toward meeting standards; and

- Outline strategies for helping students connect their jobs to their future careers.

Using the Guidelines

What the *Guidelines* Are Not:

When using these *Guidelines*, it is important to remember that it is a framework, not a procedural manual. Because it was written for broad-based implementation and will be used in a variety of educational settings (including alternative educational settings) for a variety of student jobs, the *Guidelines* are purposely general and not prescriptive. In fact, many of the tools, resources and strategies included in this document can be used with other components of a School-to-Career program. However, the *Guidelines* were developed specifically to allow students to use natural jobs as an option for meeting the New Jersey Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards. Therefore, it will not address many of the elements and important issues surrounding the state's School-to-Career effort. Not included in this document are the following:

- Procedures for using school-initiated activities such as job shadowing, career exploration and internships to document skills and meet standards;

- Procedures for using Service Learning and community service activities to meet standards; (Information for using Service Learning, volunteer activities and community service is offered in *Guidelines for Using Service Learning to Meet the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards*.)

- Specific nonwork-related (e.g., classroom activities) ways in which students can demonstrate those workplace readiness indicators;

- Strategies for connecting students' natural jobs to academics; and

- Definitive instructions on how to address challenges related to students' employers, such as discovering that an employer hires illegal workers or breaks child labor laws.

Additional resources related to these elements and issues can be found in the New Jersey State Department of Education's Core Curriculum Content Standards and New Jersey School-to-Work: Work-Based Learning Handbook.

Finding Information in the *Guidelines*

Chapter 1 summarizes current research on student employment and the potential benefits of work-based learning.

Chapter 2 offers steps for developing, implementing and using a system that links natural jobs to New Jersey's Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards.

Chapter 3 includes informational resources, handouts, questionnaires and forms to help students, parents, school staff and employers identify, assess and document students' workplace readiness skills.

Chapter 4 provides strategies for helping students connect their jobs to their careers.

Again, all of these materials are designed to serve as a framework for local planning. They are meant to be adapted and used in ways that will best serve a district and its students.

Chapter 1

USING NATURAL JOBS:
SUPPORTING BACKGROUND

T o stay competitive, today's employers need more people who can solve problems, think critically, work in teams and constantly learn on the job. However, there is growing concern that employers will be unable to find entry-level workers with these qualifications because many young people are not adequately prepared to meet the demands of today's workplaces.[1]

Recent research on young people's views of careers reinforces the concern employers have about workforce preparation. American adolescents generally have high career aspirations. The problem, however, is that many youth have job expectations that are unrealistic, given the types of occupations that are available now and projected for the future. One survey found that one out of three youth in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12 expects to have a professional career; 10 percent think they will be doctors; and another 10 percent anticipate jobs in the sports or entertainment industry. More troublesome is the scanty knowledge these students have about what their desired jobs entail.[2]

Adding to the problem is the fact that many youth do not see connections between what they learn in school and their future careers. Although many youth hold jobs while in school, few of these experiences lead them to connect what they do in school with what they do on the job; they are uninformed about the range of skills and knowledge required to succeed in today's job market.[3] Work-based learning can be a vital mechanism for helping young people understand these connections, think realistically about career possibilities and be better prepared to enter the labor market.

Why Is Work-Based Learning Important?

Work-based learning integrates classroom instruction with worksite experiences that may occur through formal school-to-career programs or through jobs that students find on their own. Both types of work-based learning experiences share the goal of providing students with the opportunity to do the following:

- Experience the workplace environment first-hand through volunteer work, internships and paid work experiences;

- Apply academics to real tasks performed in the workplace and participate as productive employees;

- Acquire skills necessary for successful careers;

- Learn about career possibilities by talking to adult employees at the workplace and by discussing work life with adult mentors; and

- Formulate goals and plans for their future.[4]

In work-based learning, educators and employers bring their own knowledge and expertise to develop a real-world context for academic subjects. Researchers in the cognitive sciences have come to agree on the value of work-based learning. Their studies emphasize that "learning by doing" can't be fully replaced by learning through classroom lecturing; that application of what is learned cements understanding; and that learning takes place best in multiple contexts. The "learning by doing" approach also offers more effective instruction for students with varying skills and abilities.

How Can All New Jersey Students Participate In Work-Based Learning?

As one of the first eight states to receive a federal School-to-Work implementation grant, New Jersey has been in the forefront of developing high-quality work-based learning experiences. Prior to the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, many New Jersey school districts were working on school-supervised work-based learning opportunities such as cooperative education programs. Since then, schools have progressed in creating more formal School-to-Career programs. However, other avenues for providing worksite experiences need to be explored if every student is to have the opportunity to explore a quality structured learning experience.

Given the realistic challenges of developing a variety of structured work opportunities, it makes sense to utilize the after-school, weekend and summer work experiences in which many students are already involved, especially if these experiences are tied to the educational standards the state has adopted. In fact, New Jersey advocates that, to provide students with a full school experience, "the application of knowledge from all content areas can be reinforced through experiences beyond the school walls," including part-time work.[5]

In order to appropriately use these experiences to enhance learning, it is helpful to have a general understanding of what is known about

students who work. The following sections summarize recent research on youth who work while in school.

How Many Students Work and Who Are They?

In 1996, in the United States, about 35 percent of 16- to 17-year-olds and 53 percent of 18- to 19-year-olds were working. (Data on 15-year-olds are not available). Among youth enrolled in high school, an estimated one-third worked in 1996, and an overwhelming majority of them (93 percent) were working in part-time jobs. The gender distribution of working high school students is about even, with slightly more males working (51 percent). White high school students were most likely to be working (37.5 percent), followed by Hispanic (19.9 percent) and black (18.5 percent) high schoolers.[6]

The best estimate for student employment in New Jersey is based on the 1990 U.S. Census. In 1990, about 37 percent (or 120,000) 16- to 19-year-olds were working while enrolled in school. White students again were most likely to be employed (41 percent), while black and Asian students were least likely to work (25 and 24 percent, respectively). About 32 percent of Hispanic students in New Jersey worked in 1990.

A general perception is that students from lower income families and students who are doing less well in school are more likely to work. However, work experience is much more evenly distributed than might be expected. According to the 1992 follow-up study to the *National Education Longitudinal Study* of 1988 (NELS:88), more seniors from high socioeconomic status families (49 percent) were working than from low socioeconomic status families (44 percent). However, those from low status families were, on average, working longer hours. Students from medium socioeconomic status families were most likely to work (53 percent).

It is important to keep in mind that these data are for one point in time when the survey was taken and should be considered only as a snapshot of how many students work and who they are.

What Do Working Students Do?

Data on the types of jobs students hold are generally limited, but the NELS:88 report provides a glimpse of what kind of work students in the 8th, 10th and 12th grades do. Most students already have some work experience primarily in baby-sitting, lawn work and newspaper delivery by the time they enter high school. In 10th grade, they begin to find jobs as fast-food workers and store clerks. By senior year, the range of jobs students have is much broader, extending from child care to lawn work, grocery cashier/stocker, office clerk, health services, warehouse worker,

delivery person and salesperson. Work in food services, however, remains dominant.

What Are the Benefits for Students Who Work in Natural Jobs?

The incorporation of work-based learning into the national School-to-Career model was based in part on research examining the relationship between students and the possible unintended effects of their being employed while attending school. A summary of the findings from research on how work experience affects students' general development, school achievement and postsecondary employment and earnings is presented below.

Youth Development Outcomes

In the past decade (and most particularly, in the past three or four years) there has been a growing consensus that young people, if they are to move successfully through adolescence, must become competent in a series of interconnected skills and abilities. These skills and abilities have been reiterated in a wide range of both academic research and practical wisdom,[7] and include the following:

- Social and interpersonal skills;
- Cognitive and mental skills, particularly higher-order thinking and problem-solving abilities;
- The capacity to understand, appreciate and plan for the future;
- The ability to take on responsibilities; and
- Integration of occupational knowledge and career understanding.

To reach these milestones, youth require a variety of rich, mutually reinforcing, challenging experiences in the everyday context in which they mature.[8] Work experience, if appropriately structured, is one context that can act as a catalyst in such development.

The most important developmental benefit of early work experience is the perceived capacity to use one's skills and abilities. When youth have the opportunity to use their cognitive skills, believe that they can learn from their jobs and develop good relationships with adults at work, then they are increasingly likely to develop a commitment to high standards at work, more likely to value work and less likely to develop cynicism about the world of work. Young people's "sense of competency and efficacy is also fostered by having work that enables advancement opportunities and that is perceived as being rewarded well."[9]

Academic Outcomes

Most research examining the effects of students' work experiences on school achievement focuses on the number of hours worked and has generally found that moderate part-time work does not adversely affect achievement in school. The performance of students who work 20 hours or less per week, as measured by grades and standardized tests, is no worse than those who do not work.[10] There is also little difference in absenteeism between students working 20 hours or less per week and those who do not work.[11]

Students working long hours (exceeding 20 hours per week), however, have lower grades or standardized test scores, spend less time on homework, are more likely to drop out and express less positive attitudes and aspirations about school.[12] Those students working 25 hours or more per week also report more absences.[13]

It is important to understand that, in these studies, the work experience is usually a separate activity that students take on in addition to their school work. It is likely that if students are encouraged to work a moderate number of hours and if they have opportunities to understand that learning takes place in both their workplaces and classrooms, their overall learning will be enhanced.

Employment Outcomes

One of the most consistent research findings over the past two decades is that students who work while still in high school, especially during their senior year, are more likely to get jobs when they graduate and to have higher earnings.[14] There is also some evidence that students who have jobs that provide greater opportunities to use and develop their skills have a better chance of being employed and of earning higher wages after high school. If students have opportunities to acquire skills through their jobs, they will become more interested in the work and do better on the job, which, in turn, will be noticed and rewarded by current and/or future employers.

Summary

Educational and economic indicators in the past 20 years strongly suggest that young people need better experiences inside and outside the classroom to help them develop the knowledge and skills to be productive citizens and workers. With the adoption of the Core Curriculum Content Standards and indicators of what students should know and be able to do, and by acknowledging the importance of the workplace and the community as places to develop and practice skills, New Jersey is well-prepared to develop innovative programs and curricula that will provide today's students with more relevant learning

experiences. Consistent with this innovative approach, the state has decided that natural jobs—the after-school, weekend and summer work experiences that many students are involved in—are one way for them to fulfill the structured learning experience option that district boards of education must offer all high school students.

As this chapter has suggested, New Jersey's innovative decision to use natural jobs as one way to provide students with a structured learning experience can be supported in various ways. First, many youth do work at some point during their high school years. As several research studies indicate, if they work in moderation, their academic achievement and attendance do not differ from those of students who do not work. In addition, students who work while in high school are more likely to be employed and to have higher earnings later. Research also shows that youth benefit most when they have appropriately structured work experiences that allow them to develop cognitive and social skills that reinforce academic learning.

The state's academic and Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards provide a basic structure to help ensure that students' natural jobs enhance learning. The research summarized in this chapter provides background for thinking about what is valuable in student work experience. The following chapter describes guiding principles and programmatic steps for incorporating natural jobs into an effective School-to-Career program.

■ ■

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2. Olson, Lynn, 'The Career Game," *Education Week*, vol. xvi, no. 5, Oct. 2, 1996, pp. 31-34.

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6. *Employment and Earnings*. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Labor Statistics, January 1997.

7. See Gambone. Michelle Alberti, *Strengthening Programs for Youth: Promoting Adolescent Development in the JTPA System*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, 1993; Mortimer, Jeylan T. and Michael D. Finch, *Work Experience in Adolescence*. Unpublished issue paper. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, 1993; Pittman, Karen and M. Wright, *A Rationale for Enhancing the Role of the Non-School Voluntary Sector in Youth Development*. Report prepared for the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, Task Force on Youth Development and Community Programs, 1991; Stern, David, Martin McMillion, Charles Hopkins, and James Stone, "Work Experience for Students in High School and College." *Youth and Society*, March 1990.

8. Kegan, Robert, Maria Broderick and Nancy Popp, *A Developmental Framework for Assessing Youth in Programmatic Interventions*. Unpublished issue paper. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, 1993.

9. See Mortimer and Finch, 1993, p.31, and Stern, et al., 1990.

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Part-Time Employment during Adolescence: Replication and Elaboration," *Developmental Psychology* 27:2, 304-13; Steel, L, "Early Work Experience Among White and Non-White Youths: Implications for Subsequent Enrollment and Employment," *Youth and Society*, 22:419-47, 1991; Barton, P. "Earning and Learning: The Academic Achievement of High-School Juniors with Jobs.*" The Nation's Report Card*, Report No. 17-WL-Ol." Princeton, NJ: National Assessment of Educational Progress. 1989.

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13. Barton, 1989.

14. Meyer. R. H. and D.A. Wise, "High School Preparation and Early Labor Force Experience," in Freeman, R. B. and Wise, D. A. (eds.), *The Youth Labor Market Problem: Its Nature, Causes, and Consequences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982; D'Amico, 1984; Stern, David and Yoshi-Fumi Nakata, "Characteristics of High School Students' Paid Jobs and Employment Experience After Graduation," in Stern, David and Eichorn, Dorothy (eds.), *Adolescence and Work*. Hillsdale. NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1989; Steel, 1991; Mortimer, Jeylan T. and Michael D. Finch. "The Effects of Part-Time Work on Adolescent Self-Concept and Achievement," in Borman. K. M. and Resman, J. (eds.). *Becoming a Worker*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing, 1986.

DEVELOPING THE SYSTEM: PRINCIPLES AND STEPS

Although the research cited in the previous chapter suggests that New Jersey's use of students' natural jobs to develop workplace readiness skills is a common-sense and obvious strategy, in practice, New Jersey has a new idea. Few accepted models or established procedures exist for using jobs to demonstrate employability, especially against criteria similar to the New Jersey Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards. There are no widely accepted practices to follow as there are for the more traditional, School-to-Career activities, such as field trips, job shadowing, career exploration or internships. New Jersey educators, therefore, have the opportunity—and a challenge—to create innovative ways to assess and document work-based learning.

Extracting, assessing and recording the learning from work experiences depend heavily on the cooperation of both students and employers. At a minimum, assessing learning in students' jobs will require that students tell school personnel about their jobs and that their employers respond favorably to requests by the school and/or student to participate in some way in the assessment process. This cooperation is by no means automatic, and schools need to recognize that there may be powerful barriers to cooperation by both students and employers. Cooperation is not likely to occur simply because the Department of Education has established a School-to-Career initiative and promulgated new Core Curriculum Content Standards. These actions have no coercive and little incentive power for employers, although as graduation requirements, they do for students. Willing cooperation is more likely to occur if students' and employers' concerns are anticipated, elicited and considered from the students' and employers' perspectives.

For those districts considering using natural jobs as an option for meeting standards, this chapter offers a systematic approach to building a beneficial, inclusive and effective system. It begins with four principles to guide those planning a system, followed by a list of steps for consideration, adaptation and implementation. It concludes with actions/suggestions/references concerning tools and resources for taking each step.

Guiding Principles for Creating an Effective System for Using Students' Natural jobs to Achieve the New Jersey Cross-Context Workplace Readiness Standards

PRINCIPLE ONE: Incorporate the Elements of Quality Work-based Learning

PRINCIPLE TWO: Identify Potential Barriers and Gain Student Cooperation

PRINCIPLE THREE: Identify Potential Barriers to Employer Cooperation and Gain Employer Support by Minimizing the Burden of Employer Participation

PRINCIPLE FOUR: Involve Parents/Guardians in the Process of Documenting Students' Workplace Readiness and Encourage Their Support

Creating an Effective System

Incorporate the Elements of Quality Work-based Learning

Quality work-based learning appears to depend more on the nature of the work experience than on the particular industry, level of technology, style of management or size of company. Whatever the type of jobs students hold, several critical elements should be considered in developing the framework for documenting work-based learning in students' jobs. Information from Jobs for the Future, the Office of Technology Assessment, Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory and the Center for Remediation Design indicates that the following elements—many of these inherent in using students' jobs to demonstrate workplace readiness—need to be in place for quality work-based learning:

■ Formal articulation of the goals of the work-based learning program by the partners (schools, employers, etc.);

■ Coordination between work-based and school-based activities to help students distill and deepen the lessons of each experience;

■ At least one staff member whose primary job responsibility is coordinating the initiative;

■ Orientation for school staff to the worksite and the industry;

■ Training and ongoing support for both worksite partners and school staff;

■ Orientation, training and ongoing support for students;

■ A work-based learning contract to facilitate students' progression at the worksite;

■ Identification of mentors for students; and

■ A mix of work-based learning activities. These should include experiential learning or reflections on the implications of the work experience (through journals, seminars, etc.), work-group learning, one-to-one mentoring, workplace instruction, technology-assisted learning (usually computer-based), and mechanisms to assess the quality of the students' work-based learning experience. In a quality work-based learning experience, the student should have the following:

  • Opportunities to do "real work" (versus "make work");

  • Opportunities for increasingly greater responsibilities;

- Opportunities to exercise both autonomy and teamwork;

- Opportunities to use vocational and academic skills;

- Assignments that require problem-solving, exploration and innovation;

- Opportunities to assume some supervisory functions;

- Opportunities to work with adults; and

- Exposure to a variety of departments and jobs at a company or worksite.

Identifying Barriers

Students enter into formal School-to-Career learning opportunities as part of a purposeful learning and career preparation process. They obtain jobs to earn money, and they may have concerns about offering their jobs as experiences used to meet the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards. For example, students may experience the following:

- Be resentful of the school's intrusion into their private lives, thinking that what they do outside of school is none of the school's business;

- Be embarrassed about disclosing the kinds of jobs they hold (some students, for instance, do not list jobs in family businesses or in the fast-food sector on resumes and personal history statements);

- Think that the particular kind of work they do does not really contribute to the knowledge and skills required by the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards;

- Fear that asking their boss to cooperate will be seen as an unwelcome burden and imperil their jobs;

- Be concerned that offering their jobs for this purpose will embarrass them in the eyes of coworkers;

- Wonder if offering their jobs for this purpose will add more tasks/burdens/hurdles to their work or otherwise complicate their lives;

- Fear disclosing that they are working more hours than child labor laws allow or than teachers or counselors would find advisable; and/or

- Fear disclosing that they are working "off the books," without having incomes reported or taxes withheld.

Gaining Student Cooperation

Gaining student cooperation in disclosing their employment and offering it for assessment is, in part, a process of ensuring that students are fully informed of the process and aware of how they can benefit. Students should understand:

- What the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards mean, including examples of the skills and abilities required and the

types of experiences through which they can develop these skills;

- That meeting the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards is a requirement for high school graduation;

- That their jobs can contribute significantly to meeting these standards;

- That the employer community in general is being asked to cooperate;

- That their employers will be approached in ways that are appropriate;

- That the burdens on their employer will be minimized;

- That the assessment process can be in the student workers' self-interest by helping the employer appreciate the students' contributions to the workplace, increasing the possibility of raises or promotions and/or making the students' jobs more interesting;

- That the assessments can contribute positively to high school records, job credentials or certifications, college admissions, resumes and/or successful application for permanent, full-time employment upon graduation;

- That using this option is voluntary, and if students do not want to use their jobs as a way of demonstrating their skills, they will be able to meet the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards in other ways; and

- That the school cannot allow dangers to the students' health and safety and will report violations of requirements for working papers and other child labor law provisions.

Identify Potential Barriers to Employer Cooperation and Gain Employer Support by Minimizing the Burden of Employer Participation.

Identifying Potential Barriers

In formal School-to-Career programs, employers are recruited and, ultimately, volunteer to participate. Such recruitment is not always easy, but once employers agree to be involved, their motivation has been established and they expect to spend some time and resources on the effort. However, employers who hire students for "regular jobs" do not have these same expectations as do those who volunteer for formal School-to-Career programs. These employers hire young people not to assist in a longer-term educational process, but because they need young employees as front-line production workers in highly competitive industries that are often subject to thin profit margins. Thus, school personnel should bear in mind the following factors that may present barriers to employer participation:

- Many employers are extremely busy and pressured. Some fast-food managers, for instance, work 50 or 60 hours per week.

- Some employers resist engagement with "government" or with "politics" and may associate schools with either or both.

- "Hassle factors" such as attending meetings, filling out forms and signing agreements may be more of an impediment to employers than are any monetary costs of participation.

- Some local managers have little freedom to vary from centralized procedures without approval from headquarters that may not be located in the state.

- In some cases, companies regard work practices as competitive advantages and treat them as confidential. In other cases, managers or corporations may simply be intensely private or proprietary and, therefore, reluctant to share job descriptions, tasks or performance assessments or to allow access to their facilities by school personnel.

- Some managers are held to rigorous performance or cost standards and may see cooperating with schools to assess work-based learning as a diversion of their energies.

- Some employers may perceive equity issues in treating some employees (those in school) differently from others, or in devoting

more time and attention to them. They may fear resentment among other employees.

- In unionized facilities, unions may fear that assessment procedures may impinge on negotiated agreements.

- Some employers may not cooperate because they are, or fear they may be, violating child labor laws. Some may be employing high school students "off the books" and see cooperation as risking disclosure that could result in penalties or, at least, higher costs.

This list primarily reflects the concerns of private-sector employers. Some of these factors will be weaker or absent among public or nonprofit employers or voluntary agencies, which may have greater flexibility. Such agencies may be under equal or even greater cost constraint than are their private-sector counterparts, but their managers may be more likely to consider it consistent with their broader nonprofit mission to cooperate in helping student employees or volunteers reach required skill and knowledge standards.

Gaining Employer Cooperation

The barriers to employer and student worker cooperation may appear formidable (and in some cases, may be insurmountable). However, understanding the pressures on, and concerns of, both employers and student workers can help districts and schools develop practices that are more likely to generate cooperation and participation. To obtain employer cooperation:

1. **Emphasize employers' self-interests. Make certain they understand that:**

   - By helping assess student learning on the job, they can know their young employees better and more thoroughly assess their potential as permanent employees upon their graduation;

   - By assessing their employees' skills by state standards, they can help young workers take their jobs more seriously, thus improving productivity, quality and customer service;

   - By participating, their young workers may stay on their jobs longer in order to obtain favorable assessments and compile evidence of progress toward the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards;

   - By analyzing student tasks and performance, they can develop accurate job descriptions (if they do not have them) and thus upgrade their own human resource systems; and

   - By analyzing the tasks of student workers in light of New

Jersey's Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards, which reflect the needs of high-performance workplaces of the present and future, they can begin redesigning and enriching entry-level jobs and move toward team-based structures that emphasize problem-solving and customer service.

- They can join other employers who have committed to this effort.

2. Minimize employers' burdens of participation:

- Communicate, whether orally or in writing, in a brief, straightforward manner devoid of jargon. Avoid prolonged background and rationale statements (or provide summary versions as attachments); instead, state exactly what the employer is being asked to do and identify the steps to be followed.

- Reduce the employers' time, effort and cost. When possible, use the employers' job/task descriptions and performance assessment forms. When they must be translated or adapted, have students or school personnel perform that task, or have the students list their tasks and then ask the employer to certify the list's accuracy and completeness. If school-designed forms are completed by the employer, make these simple and clear.

- Limit meetings. Whenever possible, visit employers rather than ask them to travel to the school.

3. Use traditional employer-involvement techniques. Consider the following:

- Employers are parents and citizens, often residing within the school district or in a nearby one that is similarly subject to New Jersey's Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards. Student workers may be the children of other employers, of their adult employees or of neighbors and friends. As citizens and parents, then, employers frequently respond to traditional appeals to "help our kids get ahead" or to "help the schools do a better job."

- Business considerations also argue for a positive employer response to such traditional appeals. Most business people value good public relations and a good image in the community. Most want to be known among their colleagues and customers as "good corporate citizens."

- Traditional appeals to community involvement and a positive business image and reputation can have real power. They can function as the first set of counterweights to the barriers and concerns listed above and may predispose many employers to

try to find a way to help out.

- New Jersey is seeking a fundamental and permanent change in the relationship between schools and businesses. As schools and districts work to build relationships with employers of students in natural jobs, patience is necessary. Some companies are champions of education and move rapidly into complex and sophisticated forms of work-based learning. But for many firms, small steps are more comfortable at the outset. While it is important that firms understand the full range of eventual possibilities for their involvement in education, it is equally important that they be allowed to begin with what is comfortable for them.

Finally, studies have shown that employers are increasingly concerned about workforce quality as an element of competitiveness, not just of their own firms but also of their communities and the nation. Across the country, business associations are taking more active roles in both educational reform and general workforce development. New Jersey's effort to assess learning by students on the job is a relatively painless way for the state's employers to join in this common effort to strengthen the state's workforce development systems.

Involve Parents/Guardians in the Process of Documenting Students' Workplace Readiness and Encourage Their Support.

In addition to their right to know about activities in which their children are involved and the progress they are making toward graduation, parents/guardians are an important part of the process of students' using their natural jobs to help meet the state's work readiness requirement. Parents/guardians should know:

- That in order to graduate, students must meet state standards for workplace readiness and that their part-time, weekend or summer jobs can be used to help fulfill the requirement; (If parents have no information or incomplete information on this requirement, this is an opportune time to inform them about it.)

- Which school staff person to call if they have questions;

- That they are valued partners in the school's effort to help students become work-ready and that they are welcome to participate in the process; and

- That the school encourages them to discuss their sons' or daughters' jobs and provide to their children personal insight about becoming work-ready adults.

Steps for Building a System

STEP 1: Consider whether and how the district could approach documenting workplace readiness through students' natural jobs and how a system could fit into the larger School-to-Career infrastructure.

STEP 2: Communicate to students, employers, parents and school staff that students' natural jobs could be a means for demonstrating workplace readiness. Solicit input from these stakeholders and assess their interest. Identify staff and provide training.

STEP 3: Determine the feasibility for the district to use students' jobs to help document workplace readiness.

STEP 4: Inform employers about those student employees wanting to document their workplace readiness skills through their jobs and obtain employer cooperation.

STEP 5: Develop a tracking system to record skill development and progress toward meeting the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards.

STEP 6: Have students assess their workplace readiness skills.

STEP 7: Have employers assess students' workplace readiness skills.

STEP 8: Document, track and recognize, according to district policy, indicators of Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards demonstrated by students on their jobs.

Building the System

For those districts considering developing a system for using students' natural jobs to demonstrate their workplace readiness skills, it is important to understand that the process is beyond the capacity of any single individual. Partners and stakeholders such as students, parents, employers and community leaders can be identified and included in the initial planning. While it is unlikely that everyone will immediately support this initiative, it is important early on to gather as much information as possible about the community's interest in using, and thus the feasibility for the district to use, its students' natural jobs for work-based learning.

Not all indicators of all five Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards are likely to be demonstrated through students' jobs. Therefore, schools will need to create systems that facilitate tracking "skill" gaps and recording how these gaps are being filled through other school- or work-based activities. Although students' jobs may provide many opportunities to demonstrate skills, skill development is a process. Young people need time on the job to develop the competencies employers or school staff define as "workplace readiness." Again, the school will need a system for tracking the development of individual skills as the student employees become increasingly proficient.

Once a district decides that it will use students' natural jobs to document skills, the process for building a system begins by informing stakeholders and seeking their input; it culminates with tracking skill development and recognizing when standards have been met.

STEP 1:

Consider whether and how the district could approach documenting workplace readiness through students' natural jobs and how a system could fit into the larger School-to-Career infrastructure.

▶ Actions/Suggestions/Reminders for Step 1

- Include School-to-Career and local employers in the initial research, discussion and planning process.

- Determine how using students' natural jobs will fit into other components of the district's School-to-Career effort.

- Consider who will coordinate using students' jobs to document skills.

- Consider who will assess students' workplace readiness through their natural jobs and how assessment will be conducted.

- Examine district policies that govern using students' natural jobs to document workplace readiness.

- Decide whether the district wants to allocate the time, resources and staff to develop this option.

▶ Using Tools/Resources for Step 1

Refer to

- *New Jersey School-to-Work: Work-Based Learning Handbook* for information on work-based learning.

- Chapter 3 of this document for examples of assessment tools.

- Principle One in this chapter and the tools and resources in Chapter 3 when considering natural jobs as an appropriate option for demonstrating skills.

Communicate to students, employers, parents and school staff that students' natural jobs could be a means for demonstrating workplace readiness. Solicit their input and assess their interest. Identify staff and provide training.

➤ **Actions/Suggestions/Reminders Concerning Students**

- Provide information through counselors, during career-related or other classes or during special meetings about graduation requirements.

- Explain or review the requirement for meeting New Jersey's Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards and outline the option/process of using their jobs for meeting the requirement.

- Encourage students to see how their current jobs relate to what they are learning in school and to their future careers.

- Elicit/respond to students' concerns. Seek their input about contacting their employers and gauge the probability of both student and employer cooperation.

➤ **Actions/Suggestions/Reminders Concerning Employers**

- Contact employers through advisory boards, through service organizations such as Chambers of Commerce and Rotary, and during interactions with employers involved in other career exploration activities.

- Examine county employment records for information on student employment.

- Consider holding focus groups for employers to assess their interest and receive their feedback on both the concept of using students' jobs to meet the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards and the system being planned.

- Personally contact local companies that hire large numbers of students and inquire about the employers' needs, level of interest, conditions for participation and what students are doing on the job.

- Explain to employers that students must meet New Jersey's Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards and that they have the option of using their jobs for meeting the standards. Outline how employers could be involved, including signing the *Work-Based Learning Agreement*, completing skill assessment forms and enhancing jobs in order for students to learn and practice more skills.

- Include an explanation of the option in all the district's School-to-Career materials and presentations aimed at employers.

- Emphasize that employer participation is voluntary.

- Respond to employer feedback, especially suggestions for making the process workable for them.

➠ Actions/Suggestions/Reminders Concerning Parents

- Present the option during parent-teacher conferences, school open houses, meetings with counselors and/or along with information about class scheduling or graduation requirements.

- Explain to parents that students must meet New Jersey's Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards in order to be graduated and that students have the option of using their jobs for meeting these standards.

- Outline how parents could be involved; for example, by helping their children complete the necessary forms, including the skills self-assessment, and by encouraging their teenagers to learn and practice new skills on their jobs.

- Discuss the importance to young people of learning on the job and connecting what is learned in school to jobs and careers—and how they might assist their children in doing this.

- Elicit and respond to parents' feedback and suggestions.

➠ Actions/Suggestions/Reminders Concerning School Staff

- Present the option during faculty meetings and in service training.

- Outline the process for documenting the students' skills, including ways in which staff can assist; for example, helping students complete a student self-assessment form and/or facilitating classroom activities that include reflecting upon what students are learning at work and how this relates to their future careers.

- Remind school staff, if necessary, of the importance to students of learning outside the school and connecting what is learned in school to jobs and careers.

- Connect this option to other School-to-Career issues.

- Elicit and respond to staff feedback and suggestions.

- Solicit staff support. Encourage staff to inquire about students' jobs and help promote the idea of documenting skills through jobs.

➠ Using Tools/Resources for Step 2

- Receive technical assistance from the NJ Department of Education, Office of School-to-Career and College Initiatives.

- Adapt the *Information Handout* in Chapter three to inform all stakeholders about the option.

- Refer to Chapter four for background information on relating students' current jobs to their future careers.

- Refer to Principle Two in this chapter as background for informing students and gaining their cooperation, Principle Three for help in identifying barriers and gaining employer cooperation and Principle Four for information on involving parents and encouraging their support.

Determine the feasibility for the district to use students' jobs to help document workplace readiness.

➤ **Actions/Suggestions/Reminders for Step 3**

- Determine how many students are working, where they are employed and who wants to use their jobs to demonstrate or document their workplace readiness skills through a school-wide survey.

- Analyze survey results and decide whether there is sufficient interest by students in the option.

- Be sensitive to issues of privacy and, perhaps, reluctance by some students to involve their employers.

- Encourage students to demonstrate their workplace readiness through their jobs, but make using this option voluntary.

- Determine whether there will be sufficient cooperation by employers by seeking guidance from business or community school advisory committees, personally interviewing key employers, discussing the option with appropriate committees of business organizations or through employer focus groups.

- Decide whether the district wants to allocate the time, resources and staff to offer the option.

➤ **Using Tools/Resources for Step 3**

- Adapt and use the *Student Questionnaire* in Chapter 3

STEP 4:
Inform employers about those student employees wanting to document their workplace readiness skills through their jobs and obtain employer cooperation.

⟶ **Actions/Suggestions/Reminders for Step 4**

- In order to encourage employers to participate and help them connect the effort with their own employees, provide a list of names of their student employees who have indicated that they want to demonstrate their workplace readiness through their jobs.

⟶ **Using Tools/Resources for Step 4**

- Refer to Principle Three in this chapter.
- Adapt and use the *Letter to the Employer* in Chapter 3

STEP 5:
Develop a tracking system to record skill development and progress toward meeting the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards.

➡ Actions/Suggestions/Reminders for Step 5

- Use or adapt the systems already in place for tracking students' progress toward meeting the Core Curriculum Content Standards and/or graduation requirements.

- Consider putting into place an integrated system that records all the options allowed by the district for students to demonstrate indicators of workplace readiness; for example, through school-based activities, work-based School-to-Career experiences and Service Learning or community service experiences.

- Develop a system that is easily used and can quickly communicate to students and school staff the students' progress towards meeting standards and filling gaps in their skills.

➡ Using Tools/Resources for Step 5

- Adapt and use the *Checklist for Tracking Progress* and the *Checklist for Actions Required to Document Workplace Readiness through natural jobs* in Chapter 3.

Have students assess their workplace readiness skills.

➤ **Actions/Suggestions/Reminders for Step 6**

- Integrate the student self-assessment process into school-based learning activities such as communication or language arts classroom assignments.

- Have students use the assessment as a resource for developing a resume, completing a job or college application, and/or preparing for job/college interviews.

➤ **Using Tools/Resources for Step 6**

- Use the *Matrices Matching Workplace Readiness Indicators to Occupational Areas* and the *Examples of Demonstrating Skills through natural jobs* in Chapter 3 as examples to which students can refer as they assess their skills.

- Adapt and use the Student Self-Assessment Form in Chapter 3.

STEP 7:
Have employers assess students' workplace readiness skills.

➤ Actions/Suggestions/Reminders for Step 7

- Offer a variety of methods and tools for employers to assess the students' workplace readiness skills. Aside from the employer assessment forms offered in Chapter 3, consider adapting and using other existing forms; for example those used for assessing cooperative work experience, School-to-Career activities, Service Learning or community service experiences.

- Consider "interpreting" in terms of the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards the employers' own performance review forms as the assessment tool for students' skills.

- Make certain employers understand that there are options for the type and extent of involvement and that any cooperation is valued.

- Have school staff complete the employer assessment forms on the basis of an employer interview if the employers refuse or are reluctant to complete the form.

➤ Using Tools/Resources for Step 7

- Consider adapting and using the various *Employer Assessment Forms* in Chapter 3.

Document, track and recognize, according to district policy, indicators of Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards demonstrated by students on their jobs.

⟫ **Actions/Suggestions/Reminders for Step 8**

- Keep appropriate faculty and school staff apprised of students' progress in demonstrating workplace readiness through their jobs. Focus future student activities on skills they were unable to develop on their jobs.

⟫ **Using Tools/Resources for Step 8**

- Adapt and use the *Checklist for Tracking Progress and Checklist for Actions Required to Document Workplace Readiness through natural jobs* in Chapter 3.

Summary

For many districts, components for using students' natural jobs may already be in place. For example, schools may have existing relationships with the students' employers and school staff may already be using their workplaces for learning. In these cases, planners could simply use the information in this chapter to add students' own jobs as an option for meeting the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards. However, if a district is "starting from scratch" in developing systems for documenting their students' workplace readiness, staff members or advisory boards may want to read carefully and borrow heavily from the information in this chapter.

DOCUMENTING WORKPLACE READINESS STANDARDS: TOOLS AND RESOURCES

This chapter offers the tools and resources to support the process of documenting students' workplace readiness outlined in the previous chapter. In fact, the tools (adaptable letters, forms and checklists) and the resources (matrices and examples) used with the *New Jersey School to Work: Work-Based Learning Handbook,* especially the *"Checklist for General Workplace Competencies"* (pages 7.0.6-7.0.13) can serve as a framework for a responsive, effective and relatively uncomplicated system.

When considering any of the tools, it is important to remember that all were designed <u>only as examples</u> for what school districts <u>could use</u> as they develop their unique systems for informing stakeholders and assessing and tracking students' skills. All handouts, letters, assessment forms and checklists will need to be adapted to best serve the needs of local school districts.

The chapter is organized as follows:

1. A list of tools and resources;

2. An explanation of each tool/resource, including potential uses and instructions for completing some of the forms and checklists; and

3. The tools/resources themselves, some of which are accompanied by completed examples.

The tools/resources are arranged in the order in which they would most likely be used in taking the steps outlined in Chapter 2.

The Tools and Resources

RESOURCE: Matrices Matching Workplace Readiness Indicators to Occupational Areas (in which many students find employment)

RESOURCE: Examples of Demonstrating Skills through natural jobs

TOOL: Informational Handout

TOOL: Student Questionnaire

TOOL: Letter to the Employer

TOOL: Student Self-Assessment Form

TOOL: Comprehensive Employer Assessment Form

TOOL: Employer Assessment Form #1

TOOL: Employer Assessment Form #2

TOOL: Checklist for Tracking Progress

TOOL: Checklist of Actions Required (to Document Workplace Readiness through natural jobs)

About the Matrices

This resource shows which of the many workplace readiness indicators of the five Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards students are likely to demonstrate in jobs in four occupational areas where many students find employment: 1) food service and hospitality, 2) grocery, 3) retail, and 4) entry-level clerical. The matrices are based on industry skill standards, entry-level job descriptions, task analysis and employer and student interviews. Although many young workers hold jobs in these four occupational areas, others find employment in different industries. The *Examples of Demonstrating Skills through natural jobs,* for which the matrices document is a key, and the various assessment forms in this chapter can be used or adapted for students employed in other industries. Use the matrices document as a source of information during all Steps outlined in Chapter 2 and as the following:

- A resource for illustrating to students, parents and employers the potential of students' natural jobs for demonstrating workplace readiness;

- Assistance with recruiting employers and orienting them to indicators of workplace readiness that students are most likely demonstrating at their workplaces; and

- A "key" to the *Examples of Demonstrating Skills through natural jobs*. After examining a matrix that suggests that a workplace readiness indicator could be demonstrated in an occupational area, students working in the area and/or their employers can then refer to the examples to identify what students could be doing to demonstrate this indicator.

MATRIX FOR STANDARD #1:
All Students Will Develop Career Planning and Workplace Readiness Skills.

X   Indicator can be demonstrated on the job.

I   Indicator can be demonstrated **indirectly through the job**; *for example, students would not prepare a resume on the job but could include their work experience on a resume.*

NL Indicator unlikely to be demonstrated on the job; *for example it is possible, but unlikely, that students would "discuss problems related to the increased use of technology" on their jobs.*

Indicators	Food Service & Hospitality	Grocery	Retail	Clerical
1.1 Demonstrate employability skills and work habits—such as work ethic, dependability, promptness and getting along with others—needed to get and keep a job	X	X	X	X
1.2 Demonstrate the importance of personal skills and attitudes to job success.	X	X	X	X
1.3 Identify career interests, abilities and skills.	I	I	I	I
1.4 Develop an individual career plan.	I	I	I	I
1.5 Identify skills that are transferable from one occupation to another.	I	I	I	I
1.6 Select a career major and appropriate accompanying courses.	NL	NL	NL	NL
1.7 Describe the importance of academic and occupational skills to achievement in the work world.	I	I	I	I
1.8 Demonstrate occupational skills developed through structured learning experiences, such as volunteer, community service and work-based experiences or part-time employment.	X	X	X	X
1.9 Identify job openings.	X	X	X	X
1.10 Prepare a resume and complete job applications.	X	X	X	X
1.11 Demonstrate skills and attitudes necessary for a successful job interview.	X	X	X	X
1.12 Demonstrate Consumer and other financial skills.	X	X	X	X

MATRIX FOR STANDARD 2:
All Students Will Use Information, Technology and Other Tools.

Indicators	Food Service & Hospitality	Grocery	Retail	Clerical
2.1 Understand how technological systems function.	X	X	X	X
2.2 Select appropriate tools and technology for specific activities.	X	X	X	X
2.3 Demonstrate skills needed to effectively access and use technology-based materials through keyboarding, troubleshooting and retrieving and managing information.	X	X	X	X
2.4 Develop, search and manipulate databases.	X	X	X	X
2.5 Access technology-based communication and information systems.	X	X	X	X
2.6 Access and assess information on specific topics using both technological (e.g., computer, telephone, satellite) and print resources available in libraries or media centers.	NL	NL	NL	NL
2.7 Use technology and other tools to solve problems, collect data and make decisions.	X	X	X	X
2.8 Use technology and other tools—including word-processing, spreadsheet and presentation programs and print or graphic utilities—to produce products.	NL	NL	X	X
2.9 Use technology to present designs and results of investigations.	NL	NL	NL	NL
2.10 Discuss problems related to the increasing use of technologies.	NL	NL	NL	NL

MATRIX FOR STANDARD 3:
All Students Will Use Critical Thinking, Decision-Making and Problem-Solving Skills.

Indicators	Food Service & Hospitality	Grocery	Retail	Clerical
3.1 Recognize and define a problem or clarify decisions to be made.	X	X	X	X
3.2 Use models, relationships and observations to clarify problems and potential solutions.	X	X	X	X
3.3 Formulate questions and hypotheses.	X	X	X	X
3.4 Identify and access resources, sources of information and services in the school and the community.	X	X	X	X
3.5 Use the library media center as a critical resource for inquiry and assessment of print and nonprint materials.	NL	NL	NL	NL
3.6 Plan experiments.	NL	NL	NL	NL
3.7 Conduct systematic observations.	X	X	X	X
3.8 Organize, synthesize and evaluate information for appropriateness and completeness.	X	X	X	X
3.9 Identify patterns and investigate relationships.	X	X	X	X
3.10 Monitor and validate one's own thinking.	X	X	X	X
3.11 Identify and evaluate the validity of alternative solutions.	X	X	X	X
3.12 Interpret and analyze data to draw conclusions.	X	X	X	X
3.13 Select and apply appropriate solutions to problem-solving and decision-making situations.	X	X	X	X
3.14 Evaluate the effectiveness of various solutions.	X	X	X	X
3.15 Apply problem-solving skills to original and creative/design projects.	X	X	X	X

MATRIX FOR STANDARD 4:

All Students Will Demonstrate Self-Management Skills.

Indicators	Food Service & Hospitality	Grocery	Retail	Clerical
4.1 Set short- and long-term goals.	X	X	X	X
4.2 Work cooperatively with others.	X	X	X	X
4.3 Evaluate own actions and accomplishments.	X	X	X	X
4.4 Demonstrate constructive responses to criticism.	X	X	X	X
4.5 Provide constructive criticism to others.	X	X	X	X
4.6 Demonstrate respect for people of different races, ages, religions, ethnicity and gender.	X	X	X	X
4.7 Demonstrate understanding of the various roles people play in a group.	X	X	X	X
4.8 Demonstrate refusal skills.	X	X	X	X
4.9 Use time efficiently and effectively.	X	X	X	X
4.10 Apply study skills to expand own knowledge and skills.	NL	NL	NL	NL
4.11 Demonstrate how ability, effort and achievement are interrelated.	X	X	X	X

MATRIX FOR STANDARD 5:
All Students Will Apply Safety Principles.

Indicators	Food Service & Hospitality	Grocery	Retail	Clerical
5.1 Work in ways that prevent common injuries.	X	X	X	X
5.2 Develop and evaluate an injury prevention program.	I	I	I	I
5.3 Demonstrate principles of safe physical movement.	X	X	X	X
5.4 Demonstrate safe use of tools and equipment.	X	X	X	X
5.5 Identify and use recommended safety and protective devices.	X	X	NL	NL
5.6 Identify common hazards and take measures to correct them.	X	X	X	X
5.7 Identify and follow safety procedures on the job.	X	X	X	X
5.8 Follow rules and laws designed to promote safety and health and understand their rationale.	X	X	X	X
5.9 Demonstrate procedures for basic first aid and safety precautions.	X	X	X	X

About the Examples

This resource is a list of examples of how students could be demonstrating specific indicators of the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards at their jobs. It is useful during all steps of the orientation and assessment process.

Use the *Examples of Demonstrating Skills through Natural Jobs* as follows:

- As a catalyst for considering natural jobs in terms of meeting the standards;

- When introducing and orienting students, employers, parents and other school staff to the option of using students' natural jobs;

- With employers as a preliminary assessment of learning opportunities at individual workplaces; and

- During the assessment process as students, employers and school staff consider specific ways that the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards are being demonstrated at students' natural jobs.

EXAMPLES OF DEMONSTRATING STANDARD #1:

All students will develop career planning and workplace readiness skills.

STANDARD 1: INDICATOR #1:

Demonstrate employability skills and work habits—such as work ethic, dependability, promptness and getting along with others—needed to get and keep a job.

Students could demonstrate employability skills at their jobs by

- ✔ Remaining on the job for requisite number of months and receiving a favorable evaluation from their supervisor.

- ✔ Routinely beginning work on time.

- ✔ Routinely taking breaks at established, appropriate times and for established amounts of time.

- ✔ Arranging necessary absences in advance whenever possible, taking into account what is least inconvenient for their employers.

- ✔ Dressing appropriately for the job.

- ✔ Giving their job duties, tasks and responsibilities their full attention while on the job.

- ✔ Completing assigned job duties and tasks in a thorough, professional, cheerful manner.

- ✔ Contributing to a "team atmosphere" by doing their share of work.

- ✔ Quitting their jobs in an appropriate manner.

STANDARD 1: INDICATOR #2:

Demonstrate the importance of personal skills and attitudes to job success.

Students could use their jobs to demonstrate that they understand the importance of personal skills and attitudes to job success by

- ✔ Projecting an "I-am-glad-to-be-here" attitude to customers, coworkers and supervisors.

- ✔ Contributing to a "team atmosphere" by helping, encouraging and respecting their coworkers and supervisors.

- ✔ Displaying loyalty to their company by speaking positively about it both on and off the job.

STANDARD 1: INDICATOR #3:

Identify career interests, abilities and skills.

Students could use their jobs *indirectly* to demonstrate that they have identified their career interests, abilities and skills by

✔ Explaining those elements of their jobs that they would like to duplicate or avoid in their careers; e.g., "I discovered at my job that I really enjoyed helping customers, which means I'll probably enjoy helping my clients in a career in the travel industry" or "I don't want a career where I work indoors all the time as I do now."

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STANDARD 1: INDICATOR #4:

Develop an individual career plan.

Students could use their jobs *indirectly* to develop career plans by

✔ Explaining how the job fits into the progression towards their desired careers; e.g., "I am using my job to help finance my education" or "I expect to be promoted to store manager, then regional manager, if I stick with the company."

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STANDARD 1: INDICATOR #5:

Identify skills that are transferable from one occupation to another.

Students could use their jobs *indirectly* to demonstrate that they can identify skills transferable from one occupation to another by

✔ Explaining during a career or communication class how the skills they use on their jobs could be used on other jobs or in possible careers.

✔ Developing a resume aimed at obtaining a new job that refers to the skills they have developed on the job they found for themselves.

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STANDARD 1: INDICATOR #6

Select a career major and appropriate accompanying courses.

(not likely to be demonstrated on natural jobs)

STANDARD 1: INDICATOR #7:

Describe the importance of academic and occupational skills to achievement in the work world.

Students could use their jobs *indirectly* to describe the importance of academic and occupational skills to achievement in the work world by

✔ Explaining during an interview or career class how what they have learned in school applies to their jobs, and how what they have learned on their jobs applies to their school work or activities.

✔ Choosing classes to learn skills for their jobs.

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STANDARD 1: INDICATOR #8:

Demonstrate occupational skills.

Students could use their jobs to demonstrate that they have developed occupational skills by

✔ Using job-specific skills learned on the job.

✔ Using skills at their natural job that they have learned during community service, Service Learning and/or school-initiated career-related activities.

✔ Using skills on the job learned through formal training/workshop sessions; for example, company orientation sessions, customer service training, training for specific equipment or systems.

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STANDARD 1: INDICATOR #9:

Identify job openings.

Students could demonstrate through their jobs that they can identify job openings by

✔ Finding their jobs through announcements/advertisements, by personal inquiry at the job site, through word-of-mouth, through a service or agency, as a result of an employee recruitment effort such as a job fair or any method other than going to work for their family.

✔ Applying for other positions at their workplaces.

✔ Telling others about job openings at their workplaces.

STANDARD 1: INDICATOR #10:

Prepare a resume and complete job applications.
(Students are more likely to use their jobs *indirectly* in preparing a resume.)

Students could demonstrate on their jobs that they can complete a job application by

- ✔ Having completed the job application necessary for being hired at their job.

- ✔ Referring to their job on a job application for another job or listing it on their resumes.

STANDARD 1: INDICATOR #11:

Demonstrate skills and attitudes necessary for a successful job interview.

Students could demonstrate through their jobs that they possess the skills and attitudes necessary for a successful job interview by

- ✔ Having been hired for their job as a result of a job interview.

- ✔ Passing skill tests such as keyboarding, spelling or data entry.

- ✔ Passing employability tests for the ability to speak English or another language, for drug usage, dexterity, physical fitness or honesty/integrity.

- ✔ Successfully interviewing for another job or a promotion at their workplaces.

- ✔ Initiating and completing an informational interview at their worksite.

STANDARD 1: INDICATOR #12:

Demonstrate consumer or other financial skills.

Students could demonstrate consumer or other financial skills through their jobs by

- ✔ Using a cash register.

- ✔ Reconciling cash drawers.

- ✔ Preparing bank deposits.

- ✔ Figuring mark-up on merchandise or discounts for sale items.

✔ Estimating cost for customers who are considering several purchases.

✔ Advising customers on "best buys."

✔ Figuring sales tax on customer purchases.

✔ Explaining coupon purchases or manufacturers' rebates to customers.

✔ Accurately completing W-2 forms and time cards.

✔ Tracking personal commissions on sales or tips for tax purposes.

✔ Monitoring their own paychecks for accuracy.

✔ Learning about the responsible use of credit.

EXAMPLES OF DEMONSTRATING STANDARD #2:

All students will use information, technology and other tools..

STANDARD 2: INDICATOR #1:

Understand how technological systems function.

Students not only use the technology necessary to do their jobs, but they understand the principles upon which the technology is based. Because of this understanding, they are able to predict results, avoid mistakes and use the systems effectively. Students could demonstrate this by

- ✔ Using and maintaining multifunctional telephone systems such as putting an incoming call on hold and updating recorded messages.

- ✔ Opening and closing an electronic cash register; maintaining cash balances.

- ✔ Taking and recording reservations.

- ✔ Closing or helping close a business at the end of the workday.

- ✔ Following procedures that assure inventory control, including awareness of scanning accuracy and automatic ordering.

- ✔ Following procedures that assure correct accounting, such as keying the correct account number into the copier and then making certain the number is cleared at the end of the job.

- ✔ Using interfacing office machines such as computers, printers, modems and scanners.

STANDARD 2: INDICATOR #2:

Select appropriate tools and technology for specific activities.

In doing their jobs, students choose the tools and technology best suited for their tasks, mindful of the need for accuracy and cost effectiveness. Students could demonstrate this on the job by

- ✔ Operating successfully common office equipment, including copiers, fax machines, phones and printers.

- ✔ Using a scale to weigh materials, products or ingredients.

- ✔ Mixing the appropriate amount of chemicals into the right amount of water for cleaning.

- ✔ Making a single copy of a computer-generated document on the laser printer and then producing multiples on the copier.

STANDARD 2: INDICATOR #3:

Demonstrate skills needed to effectively access and use technology-based materials through keyboarding, troubleshooting, and retrieving and managing information.

Students can locate electronically stored information and use it to do their jobs. In addition, they can recognize and solve problems in accessing information and using equipment. Students could demonstrate this on the job by

- ✔ Using multifunctional telephone systems for transferring incoming calls, leaving and retrieving voice mail and assessing menu options.

- ✔ Using codes and correct sequencing procedures on the keyboard when ringing up purchases.

- ✔ Interpreting error messages and successfully re-entering rejected data such as manually keying bar codes into an electronic cash register when the scanner fails to pick up a code.

- ✔ Ringing up purchases on an electronic cash register, retrieving the original order when a customer returns with a complaint and making the necessary adjustment for both the customer and the store.

- ✔ Using a hand-held computing device to take or verify inventory.

- ✔ "First line troubleshooting," such as checking the printer cable to the computer, discovering that it has been dislodged, reconnecting it and completing the job.

- ✔ Performing basic preventive maintenance on equipment, such as disassembling and cleaning computer mice, running "diagnostic" and "optimizer" utilities on computers, checking or changing toner or paper in copiers.

- ✔ Setting, resetting and adjusting electronic clocks, timers and thermostats.

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STANDARD 2: INDICATOR #4:

Develop, search and manipulate databases.

Students could demonstrate that they can develop, search and manipulate databases on their jobs by

- ✔ Helping take inventory of equipment, supplies or merchandise.

✔ Accessing electronically stored information on customers, such as retrieving store charge card numbers when customers make credit purchases without their cards.

✔ Updating information such as inputting data for changing addresses on mailing lists.

✔ Choosing items for a database to enter food orders and print out checks for customers.

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STANDARD 2: INDICATOR #5:

Access technology-based communication and information systems.

Students can operate the equipment that allows them to communicate in the most effective and appropriate ways on their jobs. Students could demonstrate this on the job by

✔ Using the intercom system to ask for information or respond to a question.

✔ Accessing training videos provided to the company via satellite.

✔ Checking theirs or their supervisor's e-mail for messages and responding to messages in language appropriate to the medium.

✔ Using telephone systems and their features, including leaving and accessing voice-mail messages.

✔ Operating FAX machines.

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STANDARD 2: INDICATOR #6

Access and assess information on specific topics using both technological and print resources available in libraries for media centers.

(not likely to be demonstrated on natural jobs)

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STANDARD 2: INDICATOR #7:

Use technology and other tools to solve problems, collect data, and make decisions.

Students recognize what technology-based information is available on the job and can access and manipulate this information to answer questions necessary for solving problems and making decisions. Students could demonstrate this on the job by

✔ Locating merchandise through an inventory system; for example, locating merchandise at another store location for their customers.

✔ Accessing "problem-solving" features of software programs, such as "spell or grammar check" or "help" features.

✔ Access information on, for example, competitors' products and prices via the Internet.

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STANDARD 2: INDICATOR #8:

Use technology and other tools, including word-processing, spreadsheet and presentation programs and print or graphic utilities, to produce products.

Using technology, students can convert information into an appropriate, usable product. Students could produce products on the job by

✔ Using a word-processing program to produce e-mail or "hard copy" such as letters and memos.

✔ Generating lists of charges, invoices and receipts.

✔ Updating and printing frequently changing material such as menus, calendars or lists of events.

✔ Change messages on electronic reader boards.

✔ Creating signage using a "banner" or desktop publishing programs.

✔ Making overhead transparencies using a word-processing program for text and a graphics utility for placing and sizing the company's logo on the page.

✔ Generating graphs or other graphics from spreadsheets.

✔ Using special features on a copier such as "sizing" to enlarge or shrink material.

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STANDARD 2: INDICATOR #9

Use technology to present designs and results of investigations.

(not likely to be demonstrated on natural jobs)

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STANDARD 2: INDICATOR #10

Discuss problems related to the increasing use of technologies.

(not likely to be demonstrated on natural jobs)

EXAMPLES OF DEMONSTRATING STANDARD #3:

All students will use critical thinking, decision making and problem-solving skills.

STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #1:

Recognize and define a problem, or clarify decisions to be made.

Students are alert to problems—or potential problems—concerning products, procedures or interactions and take responsibility for helping find workable solutions. Students could demonstrate this by

✔ Recognizing situations that are unpleasant or provoking and handling them in a tactful manner, such as when customers' credit cards are declined.

✔ Verifying whether a product is appropriate for customers' use, such as whether a toy is suitable for a two-year-old or a fan belt will work in a particular vehicle model.

✔ Referring problems or decisions to a supervisor when appropriate; for example, when company policy does not address a specific problem or when the decision involves expensive equipment or large amounts of money.

STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #2:

Use models, relationships and observations to clarify problems and potential solutions.

Students apply what they have learned from prior experiences. They make connections between similar situations; they can recognize classes and categories and use their knowledge to help solve problems. Students could demonstrate this by

✔ Recognizing cycles—such as busy or slow times—and planning their tasks and activities accordingly.

✔ Searching for items in the most logical locations, such as looking for anchovies next to the tuna.

✔ Using a policy manual for personnel information such as benefits or cause for dismissal.

STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #3:

Formulate questions and hypotheses.

Students are attentive, inquisitive and take initiative on the job. Along with asking questions aimed at solving problems or making decisions, students take the initiative to identify underlying causes and options for solutions. They offer appropriate suggestions to their supervisor, coworkers and customers for solving problems. Students could demonstrate this by

- ✔ Actively participating in meetings and brainstorming sessions aimed at improving company products or performance.

- ✔ Asking open-ended questions to determine customers' needs in order to provide exceptional customer service and to sell or promote company products.

- ✔ Assessing on a continuing basis ways of producing better products or delivering better service; for example, after shopping or visiting a rival store, providing their supervisors and coworkers feedback on the competition.

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STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #4:

Identify and access resources, sources of information and services in the school and the community.

Students use information and services they have learned about outside the job to answer questions, solve problems or provide better customer service on the job. Students could demonstrate that they can apply what they have learned outside the workplace to the job by

- ✔ Contacting appropriate government agencies to obtain such work-related documents as work permits or food handlers' licenses.

- ✔ Referring customers to another store when appropriate.

- ✔ Obtaining medical or police help during an emergency at the workplace.

- ✔ Providing information to co-workers or customers about places or services in the community, such as offering directions or discussing transportation options.

- ✔ Keeping their employers informed about ways they can interact with their schools, such as using the student employment service or participating in work-based learning.

STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #5

Use the library media center as a critical resource for inquiry and assessment of print and nonprint materials.

(not likely to be demonstrated on natural jobs)

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STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #6

Plan experiments.

(not likely to be demonstrated on natural jobs)

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STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #7:

Conduct systematic observations

Students approach problems or decisions in a systematic manner. Students could demonstrate this by

- ✔ Requesting feedback from customers on products or services; for example, asking their customers about their dining experience or the video they rented.

- ✔ Testing products; for example, learning to use a small appliance in order to demonstrate it to customers.

- ✔ Monitoring and returning floor merchandise to its proper location.

- ✔ Accounting for items after customers leave the dressing room.

- ✔ Identifying damaged items and handling them appropriately.

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STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #8:

Organize, synthesize and evaluate information for appropriateness and completeness.

Students carefully handle information on the job, mindful of its purpose. Students could demonstrate this by

- ✔ Taking and relaying complete and accurate messages.

- ✔ Checking invoices against order forms.

- ✔ Checking merchandise against packing slips.

- ✔ Assuring accurate pricing on merchandise, including recognizing the usual range of prices for items and verifying prices that seem incorrect.

- ✔ Completing forms legibly and accurately, such as timecards, repair requests, customer returns or special orders

STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #9:

Identify patterns and investigate relationships.

Students consider the causes of recurring successes and failures and take action to repeat positive results and avoid negative ones. Students could demonstrate this by

- ✔ Observing and reacting to variables in routine tasks, such as knowing the temperature must be adjusted on the french fryer when the oil is changed.

- ✔ Checking in the most likely places for misfiled information.

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STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #10:

Monitor and validate one's own thinking.

Students confirm whether their perceptions about job-related situations are correct. Students could demonstrate this by

- ✔ Asking questions of others to clarify uncertainty about their duties or performance.

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STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #11:

Identify and evaluate the validity of alternative solutions.

Students recognize that there is often more than one solution to a problem and they take the time to consider several possibilities. Students could demonstrate this by

- ✔ Offering several options to customers and facilitating their decisions; for example, pointing out to customers that taking advantage of a special promotion would save them money.

- ✔ Weighing options before simply quitting their job; e.g., asking for a schedule change, a transfer, more training or whatever might solve the problem or relieve frustration.

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STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #12:

Interpret and analyze data to draw conclusions.

Students can draw conclusions based on empirical evidence. Students could demonstrate this by

- ✔ Knowing when to report information such as the need for supplies.

✔ Consulting a reservation log to determine if a customer can be seated at the requested time.

✔ Checking the work schedule for conflicts and then discussing necessary changes with one's supervisor.

✔ Identifying correctly those customers who would benefit from other company products or services.

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STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #13:

Select and apply appropriate solutions to problem-solving and decision-making situations.

In solving problems or making decisions on the job, instead of acting impulsively, doing the easiest thing or "taking the path of least resistance," students consider appropriate solutions and make careful choices. Once they decide on a course of action, they carry through. Students could demonstrate this by

✔ Handling customer objections in ways that result in sales.

✔ Handling customer complaints according to company policy.

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STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #14:

Evaluate the effectiveness of various solutions.

Students take the time to consider the outcome and effectiveness of solutions to workplace problems. Students are willing to delay decisions while seeking more information or testing solutions; they make decisions based on effectiveness, not on emotion or ease of implementation. Students could demonstrate this by

✔ Supplying a number of options for solving problems and making a recommendation to their supervisors or co-workers; for example, students could discuss with their supervisors and co-workers better ways to provide coverage during lunch time and advocate for the one they believe is most effective.

✔ Testing ways to improve job performance or products; for example, by rearranging equipment, tools or workspace to improve efficiency and then evaluating whether the change was helpful.

STANDARD 3: INDICATOR #15:

Apply problem-solving skills to original creative/design projects.

Students are willing participants in projects and activities that involve solving problems outside their usual duties or work routine. They consider solutions beyond the most obvious. Students could demonstrate creative problem-solving skills on the job by

✔ Suggesting new ideas to solve ongoing problems.

✔ Helping organize company events/celebrations within a budget.

✔ Helping solve problems that utilize their special talents, such as the ability to draw, speak another language or relate to children.

✔ Being willing to discover solutions with other workers.

EXAMPLES OF DEMONSTRATING STANDARD #4:

All students will demonstrate self-management skills.

STANDARD 4: INDICATOR #1:

Set short- and long-term goals.

Students set high standards for personal performance on the job and motivate themselves by attaining well-defined, realistic goals and by helping the company meet its goals. Students could demonstrate this on the job by

✔ Developing written personal and professional goals and tracking achievement through periodic performance reviews with supervisors or mentors.

✔ Recognizing the need for ongoing training for professional development and participating in job-related classes, seminars or workshops.

✔ Helping meet or exceed established company sales or production goals.

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STANDARD 4: INDICATOR #2:

Work cooperatively with others to accomplish a task.

Students interact with those at work in a courteous, empathetic and professional manner and use effective communication skills to arrive at agreement and, when necessary, compromise. Students might demonstrate good teamwork skills on the job by

✔ Sharing ideas and information with co-workers and management.

✔ Attending meetings and company-sponsored major events.

✔ Assisting co-workers to better serve customers and the company.

✔ Assisting with training and orientation of new employees.

✔ Working out schedule conflicts with co-workers.

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STANDARD 4: INDICATOR #3:

Evaluate one's own actions and accomplishments.

Students are aware of the impact of their actions and behavior on the job. They are proud of their accomplishments in the workplace and can

articulate these accomplishments when appropriate. Students could demonstrate this on the job by

✔ Completing and discussing a self-evaluation with their supervisor or workplace mentor.

✔ Realizing shortcomings and taking action to correct them; for example, by asking for additional training.

✔ Communicating their job-related interests and needs to their supervisor; e. g., asking to learn new skills or discussing changes in job assignments.

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STANDARD 4: INDICATOR #4:

Demonstrate constructive responses to criticism.

Students respond to criticism unemotionally and non-defensively and use critical feedback for personal and professional growth. Students could demonstrate this by

✔ Showing improvement in successive performance reviews.

✔ Dealing with customer complaints by listening, offering options, apologizing when necessary, taking appropriate action based on company policy and seeking help in handing the complaint if necessary.

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STANDARD 4: INDICATOR #5:

Provide constructive criticism to others.

Students provide feedback to their coworkers in a spirit of helpfulness. They are empathetic with the feelings of others. They avoid personal criticism of others and focus their feedback on ways to improve performance. Students could demonstrate this by

✔ Helping train new coworkers.

✔ Providing feedback during company meetings, workshops and/or retreats.

✔ Participating in formal, company-generated surveys or evaluations.

✔ Providing constructive criticism during an exit interview.

STANDARD 4: INDICATOR #6:

Demonstrate respect for people of different races, ages, religions, ethnicity and gender.

Students demonstrate an appreciation of similarities and differences among co-workers, clients and customers and avoid stereotyping, bias or discriminatory actions towards anyone. Students might demonstrate that they respect people different from themselves by

✔ Refusing to participate in any activities, including joking or pranks, which could humiliate or demean others.

✔ Actively participating in company-sponsored diversity training.

✔ Interacting with <u>all</u> people in a professional, pleasant manner.

✔ Making shopping a pleasant experience for <u>all</u> customers.

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STANDARD 4: INDICATOR #7:

Demonstrate understanding of the various roles people play in a group.

Students are aware of their own roles/responsibilities in the workplace and the roles/responsibilities of their employers and co-workers, and they behave accordingly. They are aware of personality differences, the informal, but accepted, roles people have in groups and the special skills or shortcomings of others. They strive to "get along with" and accommodate their coworkers and their customers. Students could demonstrate this by

✔ Seeking guidance from a supervisor or experienced coworker when appropriate.

✔ Following the "chain of command."

✔ Understanding flowcharts that outline the responsibilities of company personnel.

✔ Being empathetic with the personal needs of individuals.

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STANDARD 4: INDICATOR #8:

Demonstrate refusal skills.

Students choose an ethical and professional course of action in all work assignments and understand the impact of violating the beliefs and codes of their company. Students understand the need for confidentiality. They are not influenced by peer pressure that could

result in unprofessional behavior. Students could demonstrate refusal skills on the job by

- ✔ Choosing an ethical course of action rather than an expedient or personally rewarding one, such as refusing to undercharge for merchandise purchased by friends or family members.

- ✔ Taking care not to intentionally or accidentally divulge information that should be held in confidence or that could harm or embarrass their employer and/or customers/clients, such as discussing customers' credit ratings.

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STANDARD 4: INDICATOR #9:

Use time efficiently and effectively.

Students could demonstrate that they can use time efficiently and effectively by

- ✔ Beginning work punctually, keeping to an established break schedule and working until the end of their shift.

- ✔ Planning and organizing their work in a way that is most efficient, effective and lucrative for the company.

- ✔ Prioritizing their work assignments to match company priorities.

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STANDARD 4: INDICATOR #10

Apply study skills to expand their own knowledge and skills

(not likely to be demonstrated on natural jobs)

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STANDARD 4: INDICATOR #11:

Demonstrate how ability, effort and achievement are interrelated.

Students understand the concept of cause and effect in receiving raises and promotions and meeting personal or professional goals. Students could demonstrate this by

- ✔ Receiving raises, bonuses, promotions or merit increases that reflect their efforts.

- ✔ Increasing commission-based income over a period of time.

- ✔ Meeting goals related to job performance

STANDARD 5: INDICATOR #1:

Work in ways that prevent common injuries.

Students could demonstrate that they can prevent common injuries on the job by

✔ Avoiding injury and avoiding causing injury to others for a specific period of time.

✔ Being a member of a group receiving a company safety award.

EXAMPLES OF DEMONSTRATING STANDARD #5:

All students will apply safety principles.

STANDARD 5: INDICATOR #2:

Students could use their jobs *indirectly* to develop and evaluate an injury prevention program by

✔ Applying safety principles learned in school-based activities to their jobs.

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STANDARD 5: INDICATOR #3:

Demonstrate principles of safe physical movement.

Students could demonstrate that they practice the principles of safe physical movement on the job by

✔ Avoiding injury or developing a condition that results from poor posture, incorrectly lifting or moving objects or "horsing around."

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STANDARD 5: INDICATOR #4:

Demonstrate safe use of tools and equipment.

Students not only follow written and verbal instructions for safe usage, but employ common sense when operating equipment and tools. Students could demonstrate this by

✔ Avoiding injury when operating or cleaning potential dangerous equipment such as food slicers, grills and fryers.

✔ Teaching new employees how to use tools and equipment safely.

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STANDARD 5: INDICATOR #5:

Identify and use recommended safety and protective devices.

Students use recommended safety and protective devices whether it is convenient, comfortable or considered "acceptable" by their peers. Students could demonstrate this by

✔ Routinely using safety and protective devices such as dust masks, respirators, eye and ear protection, gloves and back supports.

STANDARD 5: INDICATOR #6:

Identify common hazards and take measures to correct them.

Students are always alert for situations that pose hazards and take responsibility for correcting or reporting them. Students could demonstrate this by

✔ Removing in a timely manner commonly occurring safety hazards such as spills, objects that can be tripped over or top-heavy stacks of supplies or merchandise.

✔ Repairing, or reporting in a timely manner, broken furniture or malfunctioning equipment that poses safety hazards

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STANDARD 5: INDICATOR #7:

Identify and follow safety procedures on the job.

Students follow established safe practices in completing all tasks including routine ones. They do not take short cuts at the expense of safety. Students could demonstrate this by

✔ Completing tasks according to instruction and/or asking questions that elicit information on the safe way to do their jobs.

✔ Reading and following written instructions when using an unfamiliar product or machine.

✔ Understanding the inherent dangers of electricity, chemicals and heat, and following principles for using them safely.

✔ Knowing and practicing safety procedures that help prevent fire, theft and accidents, including participating in drills and simulated emergencies.

✔ Encouraging coworkers to follow safety procedures.

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STANDARD 5: INDICATOR #8:

Follow rules and laws designed to promote safety and health and understand their rationale.

Students could demonstrate that they understand the reasons for and follow safety and heath rules and laws by

✔ Maintaining good personal hygiene and habits that prevent the spread of infection or disease, such as washing their hands after using the toilet and covering their mouths when coughing.

✔ Storing, preparing and handling food according to health regulations.

✔ Operating vehicles with a license and in accordance with the law.

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STANDARD 5: INDICATOR #9:

Demonstrate procedures for basic first aid and safety precautions.

Students could demonstrate their knowledge of first aid and safety precautions by

✔ Completing a First Aid or CPR training sponsored by their employers.

✔ Treating an ill or injured person appropriately.

✔ Warning others of potentially dangerous situations such as spills or icy steps.

✔ Successfully completing training for handling emergency or threatening situations, such as fires, robbery attempts, bomb scares or natural disasters.

About the Informational Handout

The *Informational Handout* is a document identifying the five Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards and explaining that students must achieve the standards in order to graduate. It outlines the option of documenting workplace readiness through students' jobs and discusses how students, parents, employers and school staff can participate in the process.

Adapt and use the *Informational Handout* during Step 2

- As general background and orientation information for students, employers, parents and school staff on the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards and the option for using students' job for documenting skills; and

- As a resource for creating flyers, letters, web page information or other informational material for publicizing this option.

N E W   J E R S E Y   H I G H   S C H O O L

EXAMPLE

In 1995, with input from many educators, business people and other citizens, the New Jersey Department of Education identified five standards for workplace readiness reflecting what will be required of New Jersey graduates. These five Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards are now being addressed at all grade levels and elevated to importance in all instructional areas. The standards are these:

1. All students will develop career planning and workplace readiness skills.

2. All students will use technology, information and other tools.

3. All students will use critical thinking, decision-making and problem-solving skills.

4. All students will demonstrate self-management skills.

5. All students will apply safety principles.

By meeting these standards, our students will be better prepared for careers where high performance and technical skills are now the universal expectation.

An important part of preparing our students to work is work experience itself. Along with addressing the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards in our classrooms, (*School district name*) is committed to using work, paid or unpaid, as a way for all students to develop career plans and demonstrate their skills. As a *(student, employer, parent, school staff member)* you may have been involved in some aspect of *(school district name)*'s career exploration activities such as *(field trips to businesses, job fair or job shadowing)* or work-based learning such as *(internships, Service Learning, community service or paid or unpaid work experiences)*. These activities are designed to introduce students to potential careers and give them, in some cases, "hands-on" experiences.

However, *(some, many, number, percent)* of our students have taken work experience a step further and, on their own, have found part-time, full-time or summer jobs. These students are, undoubtedly, demonstrating on their jobs some of the skills identified in the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards. *(Name of district)* is encouraging its working students to use their own jobs to help them provide documentation of their skills and meet the 3.68standards required for graduation.

(As a working student, you can use your job to meet the standards for graduation by 1) completing a questionnaire about your employment and showing your willingness for the school to contact your employer; 2) signing a work-based learning agreement; and 3) completing a self-assessment identifying what skills you are using on your job.)

or

(As a parent of a working student, you can encourage your son or daughter to use his/her job to help met the standards. In order for your son or daughter to participate, you will need to sign a statement of support and cooperation.)

or

(As an employer of students, you can help them meet the standards by signing an agreement to participate and assessing or verifying their workplace readiness.)

or

(As a member of the district's faculty or staff, you can help your working students use their jobs to demonstrate their skills by encouraging them and by integrating the work-based concepts and materials they will be using into your classroom activities when appropriate.)

(Name of Work-based Learning Coordinator, school counselor or other school staff member) will be facilitating (school district's name)'s use of students' jobs to demonstrate their workplace readiness. If you have questions, please contact him/her in Room ___ or by calling #_____.

About the Student Questionnaire

The *Student Questionnaire* is a form with questions to elicit from students information about their employment and whether they want to use their jobs to help them achieve the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards.

Adapt and use the *Student Questionnaire* during Step 3:

- As a survey to determine how many students are working in order decide whether using students' jobs to document workplace readiness is feasible for the school district;

- As information about which employers hire students;

- As a way to determine which students want to use their jobs to meet the standards; and

- As a document giving (or denying) permission to school staff to contact employers regarding individual students.

Student Questionnaire

Information you need to know: Before leaving high school, students in the State of New Jersey must demonstrate that they have the skills to find and keep a job and to develop a successful career. If you are working now or have held a paying job recently, you may be able to use your job to show that you are employable. Please complete the following form:

Student Name _____

Year in School _____ Career Interest _____

☐   Yes, I have a paying job.

☐   Yes, I have recently had a paying job.

☐   No, I have not held a paying job.

If you checked either Yes above, answer the following questions:

Your Job Title _____

Length of Time Employed _____

Name of Employer (Business or Company) _____

Business Telephone Number _____

Business Address _____

_____

Your Supervisor's Name _____

Although it is possible to verify some of your skills without input from your workplace, a more complete picture of your abilities is possible if a school staff member can talk with your supervisor. Please check one of the boxes below. Sign your name if you are willing to have a school staff member contact your supervisor.

☐   No, I prefer that you do not contact my supervisor.

☐   Yes, you may contact my supervisor.

Your signature _____ Date _____

About the Letter to Employer

The *Letter to the Employer* is an adaptable message to employers asking them to help their student employees document workplace readiness skills learned and practiced at their jobs.

Adapt and use the *letter* during Step 4 as a way of informing employers that specific student employees want to use their jobs to document their skills.

EXAMPLE

N E W   J E R S E Y   H I G H   S C H O O L

N E W   J E R S E Y   C I T Y ,   N . J .

*Counseling
Department*

Dear Employer:

As you may know, in an effort to better prepare our students for successfully seeking, obtaining and maintaining employment, the State of New Jersey now requires all students to demonstrate workplace readiness in order to graduate. In fact, in our district, (number   ) students are currently working or have recently worked in paid positions. These working students may be acquiring employability skills at their full-time, part-time or summer jobs and could use these jobs with your help to demonstrate their workplace readiness. The following student/s who is/are employed at *(business/company)* have indicated their willingness to have us contact you:

(names of student/s)

There are various degrees of employer participation in the process of determining students' workplace readiness. Participation can range from a brief discussion with a school staff member to assessing the skills of the student/s you employ. We will be calling you soon to discuss how you might participate. Please consider helping us prepare our young people for the world of work and successful, satisfying careers.

Best regards,

About the Four Assessment Forms

The most complete picture of students' workplace readiness will emerge from the student self-assessment and the feedback provided by employers. This section offers four adaptable Assessment Forms:

- Student Self-Assessment
- Comprehensive Employer Assessment
- Employer Assessment Form #1
- Employer Assessment Form #2

The forms vary in complexity and each suggests a different strategy for documenting skills. All forms can be used with the *Examples of Demonstrating Skills through Natural Jobs,* a source of specific ideas about how students could be demonstrating skills.

Depending upon the time available, documentation requirements and who is participating in the assessment process, one form or, better still, a combination of forms could be adapted and used during Steps 6 and 7:

- The primary tool to document and record progress toward workplace readiness demonstrated through a student's natural jobs;
- A list of applicable indicators against which students' work readiness can be assessed and verified; and
- Documentation of progress toward meeting the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards.

About the Student Assessment Form

Students can complete a *Self-Assessment Form* by 1) identifying and recording what they do on their jobs to demonstrate each workplace readiness indicator and 2) assessing their proficiency with a choice of "yes," "in progress" or "not possible on the job" (Step 6 in Chapter 2). The school staff/employers then verify the students' self-assessment in the right-hand column of the form. By adopting this *Student Self-Assessment Form* as part of a district's process for documenting skills, students are not only encouraged to take an active role in identifying and assessing their own performance, but are demonstrating, by completing the form, such indicators as "describing skills" and "organizing, synthesizing and evaluating information." The *Student Self-Assessment Form* can serve not only as documentation, but as a valuable teaching and learning tool as well.

Student Self-Assessment Cover Sheet

Student _____

Name of Employer (business or company) _____

Date Hired _____ Length of Employment _____

Supervisor's Name: _____Phone Number: _____

Instructions for completing the Student Assessment Form:

Complete this form if
- You are working at a job you found for yourself.
- You want to use what you are doing on your job to demonstrate that you have or are learning workplace readiness skills.
- You want to use your job to help you meet graduation requirements.

Complete this form by
- Reading and thinking about each skill on the form.
- Consulting the *Examples of Demonstrating Skills through natural jobs*. These *Examples* are only ideas of what you might be doing; you do not have to do exactly what is listed to demonstrate your skills.
- Checking the "yes" box and explaining how you are demonstrating the skill if you think that you possess the skill.
- Checking the "in progress" box if you are just learning the skill.
- Checking the "not possible" box if it is not possible to demonstrate the skill on your job.
- Have your counselor, School-to-Career staff person or other school staff member verify your skills by initialing the "verify" box.

Student Self-Assessment Form

EXAMPLE

Assessing Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard 1: Using my job, I can demonstrate that I can find a job opening, be hired, keep my job and use what I've learned on the job toward a career.

	Yes	In progress	Not possible on my job	Verified
1.1: I have had my job for ( ) months and received a favorable evaluation from my supervisor. (Attach a copy of the evaluation if possible.) Or I have shown in other ways that I possess good work habits such as being prompt, dependable and getting along with others on the job. **Example:**				
1.2: I have demonstrated the importance of personal skills and attitudes on the job. **Example:**				
1.3: I can describe, write about or show how aspects of my job have helped me decide on or think about a career. **Example:**				
1.4: I can describe, write about or show how my job fits into the career I want to have. **Example:**				
1.5: I can describe, write about or show how the skills I've learned on my job can be used on other jobs or in the career I want. **Explain:**				
1.7: I can describe, write about or show how what I learned in school relates to my job and how what I've learned on the job relates to school. **Explain:**				

	Yes	In progress	Not possible on my job	Verified
1.8: I've learned skills on my job that I did not have before I started. **Example:**				
1.9: I found my own job. **Explain:**				
1.10: I've completed a résumé that includes a description of the skills I've learned on the job. *(Attach a copy.)* **And I completed a job interview.** **Explain:**				
1.11: I understand and use consumer and other financial skills on my job: **Example:**				
1.12: I can demonstrate consumer and other financial skills on my job. **Example:**				

Assessing Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard 2: On my job, I use tools and technology—especially electronic technology such as computers, phone systems, cash registers, FAX and photocopy machines—to manage information, produce products and solve problems.

	Yes	In progress	Not possible on my job	Verified
2.1: I understand how technological systems function. **Example:**				
2.2: I can select appropriate tools and technology for the tasks I do on my job. **Example:**				
2.3: I use skills such as keyboarding, troubleshooting and finding and managing information to serve customers and do my job: **Example:**				
2.4: I can develop, search and manipulate data bases on my job. **Example:**				
2.5: I can use technology-based communication and information systems. **Example:**				
2.7: I can use technology and other tools to solve problems, collect data and make decisions on my job. **Example:**				
2.8: I use word-processing, spreadsheet and presentation programs, print or graphics utilities (computer software programs) to produce products or materials. *(Attach a sample of your work if possible.)* **Example:**				

Assessing Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard 3: On my job, I can think critically, make good decisions and solve problems.

	Yes	In progress	Not possible on my job	Verified
3.1: I am alert to problems on the job and take responsibility toward solving them. **Example:**				
3.2: I can use what I have learned from prior experience, what I read about and what I have observed to solve problems and make decisions on the job. **Example:**				
3.3: I ask questions of myself or others about problems and decisions on the job in order to understand the background and underlying causes and I make helpful suggestions. **Example:**				
3.4: I use information I have learned in other places, such as in school or in my community, in order to help solve problems or make decisions on the job. **Example:**				
3.7: I observe things in a systematic way. I don't jump to conclusions or make snap judgments. **Example:**				
3.8: I am careful about the information I handle on the job. I make certain it is appropriate and complete. **Example:**				
3.9: I look for patterns in the way things happen on the job. I take the kind of action that I have observed leads to success. **Example:**				

	Yes	In progress	Not possible on my job	Verified
3.10: I think carefully about my opinions and perceptions. I check things out to make certain I am correct in my thinking. **Example:**				
3.11: I identify several solutions to problems before I choose the best. **Example:**				
3.12: I consider all the evidence before I make up my mind. **Example**				
3.13: I don't act impulsively or do something because it is the easiest thing to do. When I decide what is the best way to proceed, I carry through on my decisions. **Example:**				
3.14: I consider the outcome of my decisions and delay making decisions if I think getting more information would help. **Example:**				
3.15: I'm willing to tackle new problems and consider solutions that have not been tried before. I apply my problem-solving ability to creative or design projects. **Example:**				

Assessing Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard 4: On the job, I accept responsibility to learn and understand what is expected of me, and I behave in a positive manner toward my supervisor, coworkers and customers.

	Yes	In progress	Not possible on my job	Verified
4.1: I routinely try to improve my performance and my skills by setting long- and short-term goals for myself. **Example:**				
4.2: I work cooperatively with others in my workplace to accomplish tasks. **Example:**				
4.3: I think about and evaluate my own actions and accomplishments on the job. **Example:**				
4.4: I respond positively when I am criticized or receive negative feedback on the job. **Example:**				
4.5: I provide constructive, sensitive criticism to others on the job in order to help them improve. **Example:**				
4.6: On my job, I am respectful of people of different races, ages, religions, ethnicity and gender. **Example:**				
4.7: I understand the various roles people play in a group. **Example:**				
4.8: I refuse to behave illegally or unethically on my job. **Example:**				

STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

	Yes	In progress	Not possible on my job	Verified
4.9: I use my time efficiently and effectively. **Example:**				
4.11: I understand how my abilities and efforts on the job can help me achieve success. **Example:**				

continued

Assessing Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard 5: I understand the
health and safety laws and rules that apply to my workplace, and I behave in a safe way at all times.

	Yes	In progress	Not possible on my job	Verified
5.1: On my job, I do my work in ways that prevent common injuries. **Example:**				
5.2: I'm aware of injury prevention programs and have thought about and/or improved safety on my job. **Example:**				
5.3: I understand and practice the principles of safe physical movement on the job. **Example:**				
5.4: I use tools and equipment safely. **Example:**				
5.5: I know what safety and protective devices to use on my job, and I use them routinely. **Example:**				
5.6: I can identify common safety hazards on the job, and I take measures to correct them. **Example:**				
5.7: I know and follow safety procedures for doing my job. **Example:**				
5.8: I understand and follow health and safety rules on the job. **Example:**				
5.9: I know the procedures for basic first aid and how to take safety precautions when emergencies or injuries occur on the job. **Example:**				

Assessing Your Workplace Readiness

Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard #3: On my job I can think critically, make good decisions and solve problems.

	Yes	In progress	Not possible on my job	Verified
3.1: I am alert to problems on the job and take responsibility toward solving them. **Example:** *If a checker opens up a new register, I guide the next person waiting in the longest line to that station so the customers won't get angry.*		✔		
3.2: I can use what I have learned from prior experience, what I read about and what I have observed to solve problems and make decisions on the job. **Example:** *I know about calling in if I can't make it to work because I had trouble on my other job with this. Also I know we are busy on Friday night and I try to get mentally prepared.*		✔		
3.3: I ask questions of myself or others about problems and decisions on the job in order to understand the background and underlying causes, and I make helpful suggestions. **Example:** *I asked Ty, my supervisor, why we don't stock tomatillo so I can tell the customers who ask me. It's because it's not on the big order form. I suggested we put in a special order because I think we could sell them.*	✔			TR
3.4: I use information I have learned in other places such as in school or in my community in order to help solve problems or make decisions on the job. **Example:** *Another clerk needs childcare too so I told her about the Teen Parent Program. Also I know about the bus schedules. I can call a taxi for customers too. I have the number memorized.*	✔			TR

About the Comprehensive Employer Assessment Form

The Comprehensive Employer Assessment Form gives the most complete picture of the students' work readiness and can serve as a diagnostic tool for identifying gaps in the students' skills. Because it addresses the many individual indicators in the five Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards, it is lengthy and more complex than the other two employer forms and, probably, not a good choice to give to busy employers. It could be adapted and serve school staff as a key or resource for the other, simpler forms.

When completing the form, employers can consult *Examples of Demonstrating Skills through natural jobs* for ideas about how their student employees could be demonstrating skills (Step 7 in Chapter 2). They then record the students' progress toward meeting the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards by dating the appropriate boxes next to the indicators. Finally, the employers initial the spaces for verification when the indicators have been successfully demonstrated. The *Comprehensive Employer Assessment Form* can be adapted to various levels of employer participation. For example, by using the final page of the form, conscientious employers or the work-based learning coordinator can note how students demonstrated specific indicators and can provide comments or make suggestions to promote progress. Reluctant employers or those too busy to explain specifically what students are doing on their jobs can simply check and verify whether or not students are demonstrating individual indicators. Also, for those employers not wanting to complete assessments, school staff could complete the form based on an employer interview.

Comprehensive Employer Assessment Form

EXAMPLE

Cover Sheet

Student information similar to Work-based Learning Agreement 7.01 in Handbook:

Brief explanation of how students can document workplace readiness through their jobs:

Explanation of how to complete the Employer/Coordinator Assessment Form, including reference to the *Examples of Demonstrating Skills through natural jobs*:

Name and telephone number of work-based coordinator:

EXAMPLE

Comprehensive Employer Assessment Form: Part 1

Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard 1: Student has developed career planning and workplace readiness skills.

	Yes	N/A	In progress	Verified
1.2: Demonstrate the importance of personal skills and attitudes to job success.				
1.8: Demonstrate occupational skills.				
1.9: Identify job openings.				
1.10: Complete job applications.				
1.11: Demonstrate skills and attitudes necessary for a successful job interview.				
1.12: Demonstrate consumer or other financial skills.				

Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard 2: Student knows how to use information, technology and other tools

	Yes	N/A	In progress	Verified
2.1: Understand how technological systems function.				
2.2: Select appropriate tools and technology for specific activities.				
2.3: Demonstrate skills needed to effectively access and use technology-based materials through keyboarding, troubleshooting and retrieving and managing information.				
2.5: Access technology-based communication and information systems.				
2.7: Use technology and other tools to solve problems, collect data and make decisions.				
2.8: Use technology and other tools, including word-processing, spreadsheet and presentation programs and print or graphic utilities, to produce products.				

Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard 3: Student has thought critically, made decisions and solved problems.	Yes	N/A	In progress	Verified
3.1: Recognize and define a problem, or clarify decisions to be made.				
3.2: Use models, relationships and observations to clarify problems and potential solutions.				
3.3: Formulate questions and hypotheses.				
3.4: Identify and access resources, sources of information and services in the school and the community.				
3.7: Conduct systematic observations.				
3.8: Organize, synthesize and evaluate information for appropriateness and completeness.				
3.9: Identify patterns and investigate relationships.				
3.10: Monitor and validate own thinking.				
3.11: Identify and evaluate the validity of alternative solutions.				
3.12: Interpret and analyze data to draw conclusions.				
3.14: Evaluate the effectiveness of various solutions.				
3.15: Apply problem-solving skills to original and creative/design projects.				

Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard 4: Student has demonstrated self-management skills.

	Yes	N/A	In progress	Verified
4.1: Set short- and long-term goals.				
4.2: Work cooperatively with others to accomplish a task.				
4.3: Evaluate their own actions and accomplishments.				
4.4: Demonstrate constructive responses to criticism.				
4.5: Provide constructive criticism to others.				
4.6: Demonstrate respect for people of different races, ages, religions, ethnicity and gender.				
4.11: Demonstrate how ability, effort and achievement are interrelated.				

Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard 5: Student has applied safety principles.

	Yes	N/A	In progress	Verified
5.1: Work in ways that prevent common injuries.				
5.3: Demonstrate principles of safe physical movement.				
5.4: Demonstrate safe use of tools and equipment.				
5.5: Identify and use recommended safety and protective devices.				
5.6 Identify common hazards and take measures to correct them.				
5.7: Identify and follow safety procedures on the job.				
5.8: Follow rules and laws designed to promote safety and health and understand their rationale.				
5.9: Demonstrate procedures for basic first aid and safety precautions.				

EXAMPLE

Comprehensive Employer Assessment Form: Part 2

Standard	Evaluator's Comments
Standard 1: Career Planning and Work Readiness	
Standard 2: Using Technology	
Standard 3: Critical Thinking	
Standard 4: Self-management	
Standard 5: Safety	

Comprehensive Employer Assessment Form: Part 1

HG = School counselor's initials   TR = Employer's initials

COMPLETED EXAMPLE

Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard 3: Student has demonstrated that he/she can think critically, make good decisions and solve problems on the job.				
	Yes	**N/A**	**In progress**	**Verified**
3.1: Recognize and define a problem, or clarify decisions to be made. Answer: yes			3/99	
3.2: Use models, relationships and observations to clarify problems and potential solutions.	3/99			TR
3.3: Formulate questions and hypotheses.	3/99			TR
3.4: Identify and access resources, sources of information and services in the school and the community.	3/99			TR
3.7: Conduct systematic observations.			3/99	
3.8: Organize, synthesize and evaluate information for appropriateness and completeness.	3/99			TR
3.9: Identify patterns and investigate relationships.	3/99			TR
3.10: Monitor and validate own thinking.			3/99	
3.11: Identify and evaluate the validity of alternative solutions.			3/99	
3.12: Interpret and analyze data to draw conclusions.			3/99	
3.13: Select and apply appropriate solutions to problem-solving and decision-making situations.			3/99	
3.14: Evaluate the effectiveness of various solutions.	3/99		3/99	HG
3.15: Apply problem-solving skills to original and creative/design projects.	3/99			TR

Comprehensive Employer Assessment Form: Part 2

Standard	Evaluator's Comments
Standard 1: Career Planning and Work Readiness	
Standard 2: Using Technology	
Standard 3: Critical Thinking	Yolanda needs to pay attention to routine tasks at her job. She was hired only a few weeks ago and is still learning what is expected 3/00 TR Checked back with employer, Ty Rodman. Stated that Yolanda had made progress in evaluating various solutions; e.g., not making snap judgments about situations on the job. (Indicator 3.14 verified per this discussion.) HG
Standard 4: Self-management	
Standard 5: Safety	

About the Employer Assessment Form #1

The *Employer Assessment Form #1* is a simplified way for employers to participate in verifying that students are work-ready. Employers consider the abbreviated description of a student who is meeting each of the five standards and then checks the paragraphs describing the student employee they are assessing.

EXAMPLE

Employer Assessment Form #1

Please check the boxes next to the paragraphs that accurately describe your student employee, (_student's name_) and sign the form.

☐ **Workplace Readiness Standard #1: Career Planning Work Readiness Skills**

Student employee is honest and has good work habits, including punctuality and dependability. The employee has a good attitude and gets along well with others. He/she has learned the specific occupational skills necessary for the job. In addition, the employee has completed a job application and an interview.

Comments:

☐ **Workplace Readiness Standard #2: Technology Skills**

Student employee understands and can use the technology necessary for the job; for example, computer, electronic cash register and/or multifunction photocopy machines. He/she can input and retrieve electronic information and collect and manage data in the context of his/her job duties. The employee chooses the right tools for job-related tasks.

Comments:

☐ **Workplace Readiness standard #3: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Skills**

Student employee can recognize workplace problems and help find solutions. He/she knows where to locate information to help make decisions and asks questions to clarify the job when appropriate. Employee does not act impulsively or "take the easy way out." Employee takes responsibility for his/her actions.

Comments:

☐ **Workplace Readiness Standard #4: Self-Management Skills**

Student employee is a good team member. Employee shows initiative, works towards job and company goals, and uses time effectively. He/she gives and receives constructive criticism in the spirit of helpfulness. Employee behaves ethically and shows respect to those who are different from him/her.

Comments:

☐ **Workplace Readiness Standard #5: Safety Skills**

Student employee follows safety procedures and health regulations. Employee can identify hazards and takes the initiative to correct them.

Comments:

Supervisor's Signature_____   Date _____

About the Employer Assessment Form #2

The *Employer Assessment Form #2* does not substitute for either of the preceding assessment forms, but can be attached to the students' transcripts as verification of their work experience.

EXAMPLE

Employer Assessment Form #2

(_Student's name_) while working under my supervision at (_Company's name_)

☐   Has successfully filled out an application and completed a job interview.

☐   Is dependable and punctual.

☐   Has a good attitude.

☐   Has developed the occupational skills to do the job well.

☐   Has demonstrated technology skills on the job, such as using a computer or other electronic tools.

☐   Asks questions when appropriate.

☐   Contributes solutions to problems on the job.

☐   Is a good team member.

☐   Shows respect to those different from him/herself.

☐   Responds appropriately to feedback.

☐   Uses time effectively.

☐   Shows initiative.

☐   Follows safety procedures and health regulations.

☐   Identifies hazards and takes responsibility to report or correct them.

Clarification or Comments:

Signature _____

These are two tools for tracking:

- Checklist for Checking Progress

- Checklist of *Actions Required to Document Workplace Readiness through natural jobs*

About the Checklist for Tracking Progress

This checklist includes all indicators of the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards. Based on their assessed performance at their jobs or during classroom activities, School-to-Career activities, Service Learning or community service experiences, students' progress toward meeting the standards could be tracked by School-to-Career practitioners, school counselors or other school personnel using the checklist.

Use the Checklist for Tracking Progress as

■ A tool through which the workplace readiness outcomes of students' school-based and work-based experiences can be recorded in one place;

■ A means for identifying gaps in students' workplace readiness skills; and

■ A record of students' progress toward meeting standards and documentation that standards have been met.

Checklist for Tracking Progress

EXAMPLE

Student Name:_____

Career Interest: _____

Check below indicators of the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards that the student has demonstrated and indicate whether a classroom, School-to-Career or Service Learning activity, community service experience or their Natural Job was used to document workplace readiness.

Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard 1: *All students will develop career planning and workplace readiness skills.*

Completed

❏ **1.1** Demonstrate employability skills and work habits, such as work ethic, dependability,

   promptness and getting along with others, needed to get and keep a job. Skills obtained through:

   ☐ Classroom Activity _____

   ☐ School-to-Career _____

   ☐ Service Learning/Community Service _____

   ☐ Natural Job _____

❏ **1.2** Demonstrate the importance of personal skills and attitudes to job success.

   ☐ Classroom Activity _____

   ☐ School-to-Career _____

   ☐ Service Learning/Community Service _____

   ☐ Natural Job _____

❏ **1.3** Identify career interests, abilities and skills.

   ☐ Classroom Activity _____

   ☐ School-to-Career _____

   ☐ Service Learning/Community Service _____

   ☐ Natural Job _____

❏ **1.4** Develop an individual career plan

   ☐ Classroom Activity _____

   ☐ School-to-Career _____

   ☐ Service Learning/Community Service _____

   ☐ Natural Job _____

❏ **1.5** Identify skills that are transferable from one occupation to another.

   ☐ Classroom Activity _____

   ☐ School-to-Career _____

   ☐ Service Learning/Community Service _____

   ☐ Natural Job _____

Checklist for Tracking Progress

Student Name: _____Yoland Baca_____

Career Interest _____Business and Information_____

Check below indicators of the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards that the student has demonstrated and indicate whether a classroom, School-to-Career or Service Learning activity, community service experience or their Natural Job was used to document workplace readiness.

Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard 1: *All students will develop career planning and workplace readiness skills.*

Completed

☑ **1.1** Demonstrate employability skills and work habits, such as work ethic, dependability,

  promptness and getting along with others, needed to get and keep a job.

  ☐ Classroom Activity _____

  ☑ School to Career Activity ___01/01–5/01 Internship at KPPJ_____

  ☑ Service Learning/Community Service _04/00 Wetlands Project_____

  ☑ Natural Job ___03/00 Neighborhood Supermarket_____

☐ **1.2** Demonstrate the importance of personal skills and attitudes to job success

  ☐ Classroom Activity:_____

  ☐ School-to-Career _____

  ☑ Service Learning/Community Service ___04/00 Wetlands Project_____

  ☑ Natural Job _____03/00 Neighborhood Supermarket_____

☑ **1.3** Identify career interests, abilities and skills.

  ☑ Classroom Activity: _10th Grd Careers and Life Skills Class_____

  ☑ School to Career Activity _01/01–05/01 Internship at KPPJ_____

  ☐ Service Learning/Community Service_____

  ☐ Natural Job _____

☑ **1.4** Develop an individual career plan _____

  ☑ Classroom Activity_10th Grd Careers and Life Skills Class_____

  ☐ School-to-Career _____

  ☐ Service Learning/Community Service_____

  ☐ Natural Job _____

☑ **1.5** Identify skills that are transferable from one occupation to another.

  ☑ Classroom Activity _10th Grd Careers and Life Skills Class_____

  ☑ School-to-Career ___01/01–05/01 Internship at KPPJ_____

  ☑ Service Learning/Community Service ___04/00 Wetlands Project_____

  ☑ Natural Job ____03/00 Neighborhood Supermarket_____

About the Checklist of Actions Required to Document Workplace Readiness through Natural Jobs

The *Checklist of Actions Required* is a form listing the steps in a school district's system for documenting workplace readiness through students' natural jobs. A school staff member initiates the *Checklist* when students agree to demonstrate their workplace readiness through their after-school, summer or part-time jobs. School personnel update the form as they, employers, parents and students complete the various forms or take the actions necessary to document workplace readiness.

Adapt during Step 5 and use the checklist during Step 8 as

■ An informational outline for the school's system for documenting the students' workplace readiness;

■ A tool for tracking actions necessary for student employees to document workplace readiness.

Checklist of Actions Required

EXAMPLE

Date _____

Student Name _____ Year in School _____

Job Title _____ Length of Time Employed _____

Business _____ Business Phone Number _____

Business Address _____

Supervisor's Name _____

_____ Student questionnaire completed/student willing to have school contact employer
_____ Employer contacted by staff member
_____ Employer orientation completed; employer signed *Work-Based Learning Experience Agreement* and received materials

> *Brief description of how employer will participate:*

_____ Parent orientation completed; parent signed *Work-Based Learning Experience Agreement*
_____ Student orientation completed; student signed *Work-Based Learning Experience Agreement* and received materials indicated in plan below

> *Brief description of plan for how student will use his/her job to demonstrate work readiness.*
>
> *List Assessment Forms to be completed and other pertinent assessment activities through which this student could demonstrate workplace readiness indicators. Record start and completion date for forms or activities.*
>
> | | *Started* | *Completed* |
> |---|---|---|
> | _____ | _____ | _____ |
> | _____ | _____ | _____ |
> | _____ | _____ | _____ |
>
> _____ Plan completed.   School Staff Signature:_____

Checklist of Actions Required

Date 1/23/01

Student Name _____ Yolanda Marie Baca _____   Year in School ___ 11 ___

Job Title _____ Grocery Clerk _____   Length of Time Employed ___ 6 weeks ___

Business ___ Neighborhood Supermarket ___   Business Phone Number ___ 000-0000 ___

Business Address _____ 000 N Street, Medium-sized New Jersey City, NJ _____

Supervisor's Name ___ Ty Rodman _____

__1/22__   Student questionnaire completed/student willing to have school contact employer

__1/29__   Employer contacted by staff member

__2/14__   Employer orientation completed; employer signed *Work-Based Learning Experience Agreement* and received materials

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Brief description of how employer will participate:
Mr. Rodman has agreed to complete the Comprehensive Employer Assessment Form during the next month and discuss it with Yolanda during working hours. He will also help verify her Self-Assessment.

__2/16__   Parent orientation completed; parent signed *Work-Based Learning Experience Agreement*

__2/16__   Student orientation completed; student signed *Work-Based Learning Experience Agreement* and received materials indicated in plan below

CHECKLIST OF ACTIONS

Brief description of plan for how student will use his/her job to demonstrate work readiness.

Yolanda will complete the Student Assessment Checklist as soon as possible; employer will complete Comprehensive Form; counselor will track progress and arrange with service learning coordinator for Wetlands Project and other school staff members to help verify additional indicators.

List below Assessment Forms to be completed and other pertinent assessment activities through which this student could demonstrate workplace readiness indicators. Record start and completion date for forms or activities.

	Started	*Completed*
Comprehensive Assessment Form	2/14	2/28
Student Self-Assessment	2/16	5/31
Wetlands Proj coordinator verifies indicators		6/03
Checklist for Tracking Progress	3/21	6/08

6/97 Plan completed

Signature: *Harry Greenston*, School Counselor

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Chapter 4

CONNECTING CURRENT JOBS TO FUTURE CAREERS: STRATEGIES

A long with demonstrating and documenting indicators of the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards, students' natural jobs offer other opportunities for preparing students for the global, technologically based, changing marketplace. One finding that supports New Jersey's School-to-Career efforts is that, although many students have part-time jobs, there is infrequent linkage between those jobs and career planning/exploration. Young people often see their current employment only as "a paycheck" with little relationship to what they want to do in life. In effect, students consider work as separate and unrelated to school or their future.

Although students' jobs might not be as well related to their anticipated careers as School-to-Career activities, such as job shadowing, career exploration and, especially, internships and some Service Learning experiences, they provide another means for learning first-hand about work and oneself. Students who are successful at jobs that they find for themselves are practicing the basic employability skills addressed in many indicators of the standards. They have found and applied for a job, for example, and demonstrated a work ethic.

Some jobs may offer opportunities related to specific careers. For example, those students interested in sales or marketing and who are working in retail positions are already directly engaged in their desired careers, although they might not acknowledge this fact nor recognize their advantage over those entering these fields with no experience. Students employed in clerical jobs and other positions could be on a career track, too, especially if their positions are in the occupational areas in which they are interested. For example, a future health care professional could be working as an aide at a senior facility or as an x-ray file clerk in a clinic.

This chapter offers six general strategies for helping students connect their jobs to viable, personally satisfying careers in any occupational area. A list of the strategies is followed by ways in which the strategies could be implemented.

Strategies for Helping Students
Connect their Jobs to Careers

STRATEGY ONE: Discuss with students the connections between their jobs and their career interest. Inform employers, parents and other school staff about connections and encourage them to help students relate their jobs to their careers.

STRATEGY TWO: Help students understand that current jobs offer opportunities to develop and demonstrate skills desired by all employers.

STRATEGY THREE: Encourage students to use their jobs as career explorations.

STRATEGY FOUR: Help students identify the job duties/tasks/skills that are similar to what they anticipate doing during their careers.

STRATEGY FIVE: Encourage the enhancement of jobs to better prepare students for desired careers.

STRATEGY SIX: Provide ways for students to reflect upon and discuss their jobs in terms of their careers.

Implementing the Strategies

STRATEGY ONE:

Discuss with students the connections between their jobs and their career interest. Inform employers, parents and other school staff about connections and encourage them to help students relate their jobs to their careers.

With students:
- As students begin to consider their careers, have school counselors/staff help them identify potential part-time or summer jobs that are related to their interests.
- Respond to information from students about their employment in ways that reinforce the value of their jobs to their careers.

With employers:
- During presentations, meetings and appointments with employers regarding the districts' School-to-Career efforts, discuss connections between the students' career interests and typical student jobs.
- Encourage employers to ask their student employees about career plans and discuss with them how their current jobs are related.
- Encourage employers to share information with their student employees about their own first jobs and how those relate to their current positions. Suggest that employers discuss former employees' career development, especially those former employees who learned the same skills in their jobs as the students are learning.

With parents:
- During presentations, meetings and through appropriate printed material, discuss how students' jobs are the first steps in their careers. Have school staff and employer guest speakers discuss connections between developing careers and typical student jobs.
- Encourage parents to talk to their children about skills learned through their own first jobs and how these relate to their current positions.

With school staff:
- During staff meetings, offer a presentation or written information on how typical student jobs can be connected to specific careers or clustered disciplines.

- Encourage staff to discuss career interests with students, inquire about their jobs and help them make connections between current jobs and careers.
- Encourage school staff to share with students information about their own first jobs, what they learned and how it related to their careers and current positions. This can be especially helpful to students with career interests in education.

STRATEGY TWO:
Help students understand that current jobs offer opportunities to develop and demonstrate skills desired by all employers.

- During the steps in Chapter 2 and while using the tools and resources in Chapter 3, emphasize that the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards reflect the skills future employers require of their employees and that by meeting these standards, students are preparing for their careers.

- When possible, discuss the individual workplace readiness indicators of the standards in terms of students' career interests. For example, when helping students assess their progress toward achieving Standard #3, Indicator #1 (Recognize and define a problem, or clarify decisions), have them predict or research the types of problems/decisions they might encounter in their future jobs/careers.

- Especially for those students working in jobs with fewer obvious connections to anticipated careers, help them identify and articulate the basic employability skills they are learning by working. Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard #1 (All students will develop career planning and workplace readiness skills) contains many of these basic skills.

- Facilitate students' using their own jobs as reference points and comparisons when they take part in career-related activities (such as job search, career explorations and job interviews). For example, have students working in retail positions reflect upon or discuss the similarities and differences between their store security duties and the duties of law enforcement officers.

- Have students include their work experiences and skills learned on the job when producing career-related materials such as resumes, completed training/college applications and/or portfolios.

STRATEGY THREE:
Encourage students to use their jobs as career explorations.

- As students identify career interests, have those who are working (or who have been employed) consider the elements of their jobs that most interest them. Have them consider whether future jobs will provide those elements. For example, if students enjoy driving a car and being "out and about" as part of their pizza delivery jobs, have them research whether potential careers of interest offer similar duties/tasks.

- Suggest that students be aware of the many other job possibilities related to the businesses they work for. Encourage them to observe the job duties/tasks of others at their workplaces and consider whether these are potential careers for themselves. For example, if students work in a restaurant, have them consider what the company payroll clerk, the district manager, the health inspector and the landscaper do in their jobs and whether these duties are appealing.

STRATEGY FOUR
Help students identify their job duties/tasks/skills that are similar to what they anticipate doing during their careers.

- Have students compare the industry skills standards for their current jobs to those of jobs in their anticipated career and identify skills applicable to future careers that they are, or could be, learning.

- Encourage students to interview/talk to those employed in careers in which they are interested. As part of these discussions, have students describe their own jobs and ask the working adults to help them identify skills they could develop at work specifically related to the careers they envision for themselves.

STRATEGY FIVE
Encourage the enhancement of jobs to better prepare students for desired careers.

- Encourage employers to ask their student employees about their career plans and to discuss ways in which they might learn other skills or take on additional responsibilities relevant to their careers. For example, the owner of a small business might allow a student employee interested in a construction career to help estimate the materials cost for a small building project or help design and renovate an office space.

- Encourage students to discuss their career plans with their supervisors/employers and let them know they are interested in learning skills connected with their careers. Suggest that students do this at appropriate times such as during interviews for promotions or performance reviews.

- Encourage students to solicit and take opportunities offered through their jobs that could further their career development. These might include assuming additional responsibilities, receiving training and moving into different positions. For example, a student interested in a career in communications but working in a retail position could ask the supervisor to allow them to help write the advertising copy, design signs or announce "specials" over the sound system.

STRATEGY SIX
Provide ways for students to reflect upon and discuss their jobs in terms of their careers.

- Encourage teachers and other school staff to offer classroom activities and assignments connecting students' jobs to their anticipated careers.
- Develop or encourage the development of tools such as questionnaires, journal assignments, check-off lists and interviewing scripts to be used by school staff (or employers and parents) as means for helping students examine and reflect upon their jobs in relationship to their careers.

Summary

For school staff and others promoting the idea and engaged in the process of using students' jobs to document workplace readiness, an accompanying goal could be to help students recognize, enhance and exploit career-related opportunities offered by their jobs. Just as the steps outlined in Chapter 2 and the tools and resources in Chapter 3 are designed to include the input of and be used by the students themselves, their employers, parents and school staff members, the strategies in this chapter are also inclusive. As the idea that learning takes place in the workplace as well as in the classroom becomes an accepted fact, perhaps employers will inquire of their young workers with genuine interest, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"; parents will routinely ask their children, "What did you learn on the job today?" and students will ask themselves "What am I learning that will help me be who I want to be?

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